THE Hollywood REPORTER
CANNES DAILY №8
MAY 22, 2013
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The Hollywood Reporter

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CANNES CRIME SPREE CONTINUES

By Sharon Swart

Festgoers beware: The Cannes crime spree isn't over. Following last week's news of the high-profile $1 million Chopard heist and the burglary of China Film Group vp **Zhang Qiang**'s rented apartment, there are reports of new victims.

CIT Group managing director **Kevin Khanna** and Silver Pictures COO **Steve Richards** returned to their five-bedroom villa behind the Majestic yesterday to find all of their valuables missing.

"In the span of an hour, they had gotten into the house through the roof and gone through all of our rooms," says Khanna. "They only took cash, laptops, iPads and women's jewelry, but left our passports and credit cards. They were very professional."

Khanna's group reported the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Apsara Preps Global Deals for High-Profile Titles

By Stuart Kemp

Apsara Distribution, the pan-Asian rights-buying arm of IM Global has snapped up a slew of high-profile Cannes market titles. The company has a deal with Buena Vista International in selected territories including Hong Kong, Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

From left: *Behind the Candelabra*'s Steven Soderbergh, Michael Douglas, Jerry Weintraub and Matt Damon arrived at the Monday screening of their competition entry.

VALERY HACHE/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

A Topsy-Turvy Cannes Market

Robust one day, dead the next, business was as unpredictable as the weather. At least there was star power in the form of Martin Scorsese, Tim Burton and Keanu Reeves *By Pamela McClintock & Stuart Kemp*

In terms of dealmaking, the Cannes market was as varied as the wild weather, with some sellers reporting a general slowdown and others touting numerous sales.

If moods were generally glum, it was because there wasn't the same parade of big-budget projects flooding the Cannes pre-sales market as in the past two years (*Cloud Atlas*, *Lone Survivor*, *Paranoia* and *The Mortal Instruments* among them). Part of the issue is that international sales agents are all going after the same stars, making it harder to close deals in time for Cannes.

"It's very challenging for buyers today when they come to Cannes and aren't excited by the product," says one veteran agent. "Throw in the weather, and it sucks the electricity out of the marketplace. We didn't do a good enough job in exciting them."

The projects emerging as the favorites among foreign distributors included two **Keanu Reeves** projects: **Brian Kirk**'s romantic sci-fi epic *Passengers*, in which the actor stars opposite **Reese Witherspoon** as the captain of a spaceship, and Lionsgate and Thunder Road's revenge action movie *John Wick*, in which the actor plays a former hit man.

Exclusive Media, which is handling international sales, did very well with the project, while CAA closed a deal with The Weinstein Co. Tuesday for U.S. rights. Exclusive Media's **Alex Walton**, head of international sales, also showed buyers footage of **Natalie Portman**'s Western *Jane Got a Gun*, and is closing deals in available territories.

Tarsem Singh's supernatural thriller *Selfless* starring **Ryan Reynolds** was universally embraced. *Looper* team Endgame Entertainment and FilmDistrict are co-producing and co-financing the film, which was

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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THR HEAT INDEX

MICHAEL DOUGLAS
Forget "Greed is good." Douglas has a new catchphrase, Liberace's "Too much of a good thing is … wonderful!" as his *Behind the Candelabra* draws raves, boosting his chances for a Cannes acting award.

BERNARD BROCHAND
During the last fest before the Cannes mayor steps down in March 2014 after 13 years, Cannes-related headlines highlighted a string of muggings, burglaries and even a shootout (with blanks). Going out with a bang!

JEROME PAILLARD
The Marche du Film exec director has something to smile about: As of the weekend, the number of market attendees was up 4 percent year-over-year to 11,700, with Africa, Asia and the U.S. contributing to the growth.

KNOW YOUR DEALMAKER

Alison Thompson, co-president, Focus Features International

Black Sea, **Kevin Macdonald**'s submarine thriller starring **Jude Law**, which Thompson shopped in Cannes, quickly sold out. The sales agent with more than three decades of experience also has seen robust interest in the unauthorized **Amy Winehouse** doc announced on the eve of the market.

Cannes Market

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

sold in Cannes to foreign buyers by **Glen Basner**'s FilmNation. By the end of the weekend, Basner was sold out.

"We believe the marketplace is more discerning than ever," says Basner.

The Weinstein Co. wowed with **Tim Burton**'s *Big Eyes*, a biopic of artists **Walter** and **Margaret Keane** that stars **Amy Adams** and **Christoph Waltz**. Burton came to Cannes to personally woo foreign distributors, as well as the media. Waltz, a member of the Cannes film festival jury this year, also participated.

Witherspoon

Burton wasn't the only top-flight director or star showing up at the market to promote their projects. **Justin Timberlake**, who has signed on to star in the **Neil Bogart** biopic *Spinning Gold*, held a brunch with distributors and co-hosted an evening fete with Foresight Unlimited, the film's producer and financier.

During the festival, Foresight CEO **Mark Damon** inked a multiterritory deal with Sony Worldwide Acquisitions Group, sold numerous territories and is in the process of closing more. RCA Records is partnering on the film, so Sony's film studio would be a natural fit to release *Spinning Gold* in the U.S. "The project has sold well because of Justin's involvement and the fact that the major distributors want something that is unique and different," says Damon.

Mister Smith Entertainment concluded a slew of sales for *Mortal Instruments 2*. And IM Global's **Stuart Ford** reported brisk sales for **Martin Scorsese**'s *Silence* after the director met with buyers at the festival but was still dotting the i's and crossing the t's on the paperwork. THR

Crime Spree

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

incident to the police, who said "nothing could be done and that these robberies happen all the time," says Khanna. "They told us we were lucky that we weren't in the house and that no one got hurt."

But physical attacks are being reported as well. Banker **Charles Heaphy** was mugged late at night near the Cannes train station a few days ago.

According to Heaphy, police told him he was lucky he wasn't stabbed. Gersh agent **Jay Cohen** and Waterstone Entertainment's **Stephen Bowen** and **Jeff Kalligheri** also were accosted as they left the Palm Beach casino on Saturday night at around 3 a.m. Three men started to push and grab at them, attempting to lift a wallet and watch.

"They followed us for 10 minutes, then snuck up on us, and I put my umbrella in my hand like a punching glove," says Cohen. "Jeff told them we were sober, so they may not want to do this and eventually we got them away. The funny part was none of them were very large. But they want to take advantage of drunk people coming out of clubs." Film Tree execs **Graham Begg** and **Ed Sharp** had a robbery at their Cannes apartment as well. "Laptops, iPads, money, credit cards, clothes were among the items stolen," says Begg. "They left our passports."

"There have always been issues with this sort of thing during the festival," adds Khanna, "but it seems like there is more of it this year. I think it's tied to the poor economic conditions." THR

Apsara

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Malaysia, Thailand, Taiwan, Vietnam and Cambodia.

Titles secured by Apsara include *Lone Survivor*, starring **Mark Wahlberg**, and the **Liam Hemsworth** and **Harrison Ford** starrer *Paranoia*.

It also took soccer-legend feature *Pele* for India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and the Formula One racing doc *1* with **Michael Fassbender** narrating in the same territories.

The slew of deals reflects the power of the deal IM Global and Buena Vista International struck across South East Asia and beyond, a region widely regarded as enjoying explosive growth.

Says Apsara vp of acquisitions **Ben Rekhi**: "The sellers all understand our releasing potential, via Buena Vista International and Reliance, and our bankability now so the product is really starting to flow. We anticipate stepping up our buying activity even further in Toronto and at AFM."

Martin Scorsese's *Silence* will also go out via Apsara in Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. THR

Where Are They Now?

The status of three high-profile titles from Cannes 2012

Pinocchio

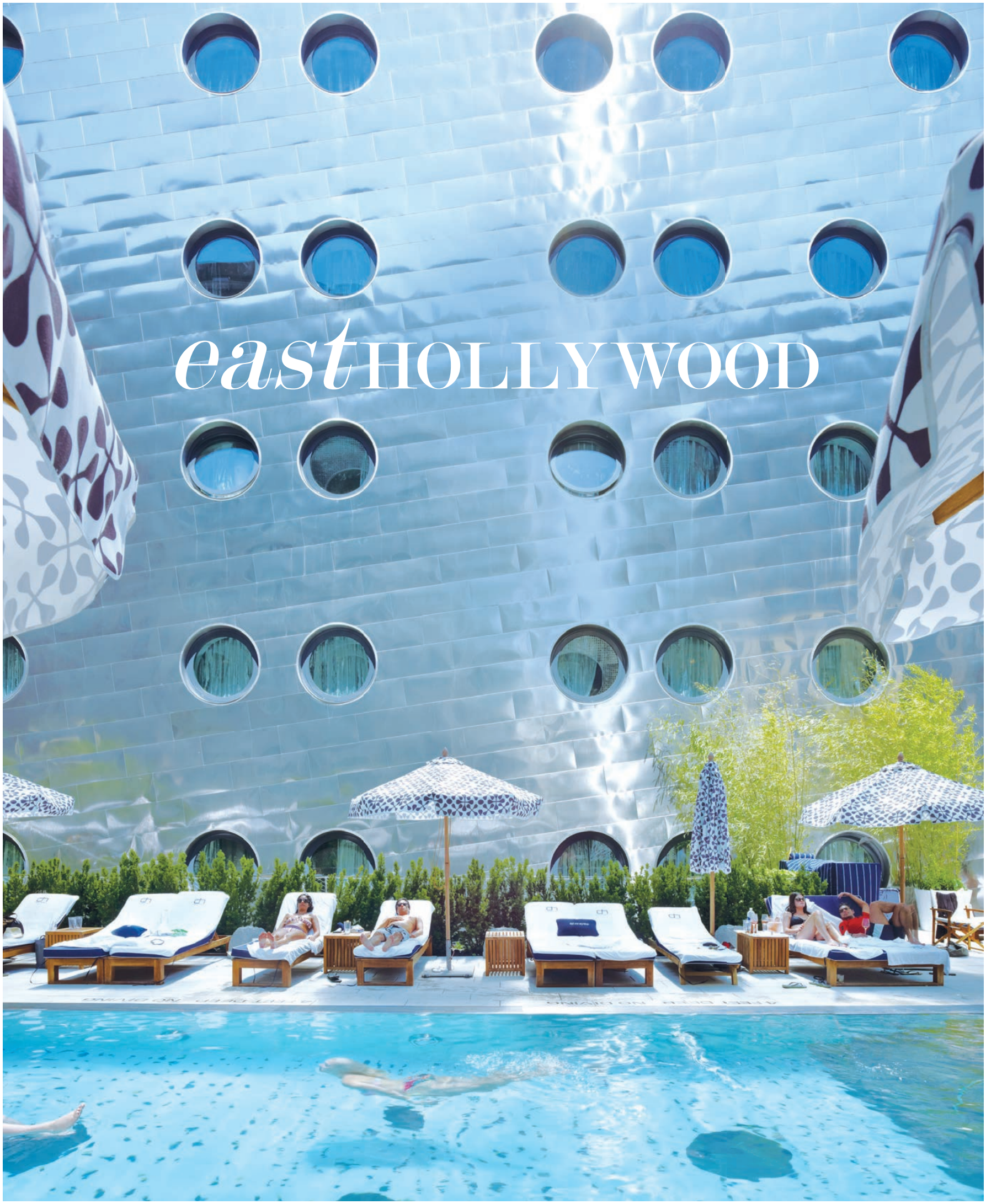
THEN L.A.-based banner Inferno Entertainment organized a dog-and-pony show for the planned stop-motion adaptation, to be co-directed by **Guillermo del Toro** and **Mark Gustafson**.
NOW The film was supposed to be ready by 2014, but was shelved earlier this year. **Daniel Radcliffe** was among the voice talent eyed for the film, but observers mentioned the moderate box-office track record of stop-motion projects as a concern for investors.

The Happy Prince

THEN The Oscar Wilde biopic was unveiled as **Rupert Everett**'s directorial debut last year, with Everett, **Colin Firth** and **Emily Watson** starring. Beta Cinema picked up world sales rights to the project and pre-sold the film.
NOW Shooting has been pushed back, with principal photography likely to begin in 2014. But the project has subsidy support from Germany's Medienboard Berlin-Brandenberg and the MDM regional film fund. Concorde has picked up the film for Germany.

Lone Survivor

THEN Foresight Unlimited shopped the U.S. Navy SEALs action film from **Peter Berg**, based on real-life events, with stars **Mark Wahlberg** and **Taylor Kitsch**.
NOW The completed film has been screening in Cannes this year. Universal Pictures will release it in the U.S. on Jan. 10, 2014. THR



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Douglas Says *Bonjour*, Soderbergh Bids *Au Revoir*

The *Behind the Candelabra* filmmakers strike reflective notes at an emotional Cannes press conference *By Gregg Kilday*

Michael Douglas, one of the screen's most self-assured performers, momentarily lost it.

At Tuesday's official Cannes press conference for *Behind the Candelabra*, Douglas, 68, was recounting how the project about the famed pianist **Liberace** and his relationship with a much younger man, **Scott Thorson**, came about: Director **Steven Soderbergh** first tossed out the idea of Douglas playing the flamboyant showman way back in 2000 when they were making *Traffic* together. Several years ago, enlisting producer **Jerry Weintraub** to option Thorson's memoir, *Behind the Candelabra: My Life With Liberace*, Soderbergh returned to the idea, engaging screenwriter **Richard LaGravenese** and approaching **Matt Damon** to play Thorson.

"Matt said, 'It sounds great,' " Douglas recalled. "And so for me ..." Suddenly, his voice choked with emotion. Collecting himself, he continued, "Sorry, because it was right after my cancer, and this beautiful gift was handed to me, and I'm eternally grateful for Steven and Matt and Jerry for waiting for me."

Later, speaking with *THR*, Douglas said of the moment, "It totally came over me." Although his throat cancer, diagnosed in 2010, had been treated successfully, the actor still was recovering his strength when the project suddenly gathered momentum. "For this to come along, when you're wondering if you have a career — you've had this big hiatus break, you don't know what repercussions cancer has for being hired. It was something so much to look forward to."

Douglas' performance in the film, which HBO will air May 26, already is being hailed as one of the best of his career, immediately putting him into contention for a Cannes award and making him a formidable Emmy contender. But while it marks a new beginning for the actor, it also may mark the end of a long chapter for Soderbergh, 50, who has said he intends to take a sabbatical from filmmaking.

The director, whose first film, *sex, lies, and videotape*, won the Palme d'Or in 1989, was asked if *Candelabra* is his swan song.

"As far as this being my swan song, I don't know," Soderbergh said, reflecting on his own career. "I'm absolutely taking a break. I don't know how extended it is going to be. I can't say that if this were the last movie I made I would be unhappy. I'm really, really proud of this film. I feel there is a connection on one hand to my first film, because at the end of the day, it's about two people in a room, and that's what my first film was about, and at the same time, stylistically, it's a progression." He concluded, "So it's been a nice run." THR

Soderbergh (left) and Douglas conferred on the set of *Behind the Candelabra*.

KINO LORBER TAKES COMPETITION ENTRY *TOUCH OF SIN* FOR U.S.

By Rhonda Richford

MK2 on Tuesday announced a slate of territory sales for **Jia Zhang-ke**'s *A Touch of Sin*, including for the U.S., the Benelux countries and Greece.

Kino Lorber took the title for the U.S., Cineart bought it for Benelux, and AMA grabbed it for Greece. Previously, Ad Vitam had purchased the movie for France, Arrow acquired it for the U.K., Golem has it for Spain, Midas for Portugal and Filmswelike took rights for Canada.

In addition, MK2 is in final negotiations for Germany, Italy, Scandinavia, Korea, Brazil, Turkey and the former Yugoslavia territories, and expects to announce final market deals soon.

Co-production company Bitters End will release the Chinese-language film in Japan.

"We've been followers and admirers of Jia's work for many years, but like the lightning we had in Cannes all week, we were struck by his bold vision and this stunning new film, says Kino Lorber CEO **Richard Lorber**. "We're exhilarated to introduce Jia's extraordinary talent with *A Touch of Sin* to wider audiences in the U.S." THR

EONE INKS MAJOR DEALS FOR CRONENBERG'S *MAPS TO THE STARS*

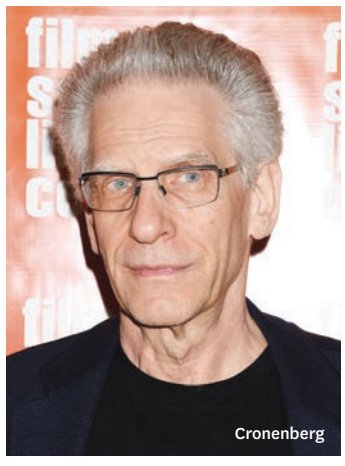
The Julianne Moore and Robert Pattinson starrer has been sold to the Benelux, Poland, Scandinavia and Iceland *By Etan Vlessing*

David Cronenberg's *Maps to the Stars* has pointed the way to major territorial sales deals for Entertainment One in Cannes.

The Canadian distributor on Monday confirmed it has sold Cronenberg's next picture to Cineart in the Benelux, Monolith in Poland, Mis Label in Scandinavia and Gmight in Iceland.

Other Cannes dealmaking for the **Julianne Moore** and **Robert Pattinson** starrer includes sales to Switzerland's PatheAG, Lusomundo in Portugal, Turkey's Calinos, Israel's Shani and Hollywood in Greece.

Entertainment One reports it also is close to inking deals for the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Middle East, Brazil, Mexico, Peru, Hong Kong and India.



Cronenberg

Longtime Cronenberg producer **Martin Katz** and his Prospero Pictures shingle are co-financing *Maps to the Stars* with Entertainment One, which also is handling worldwide sales and distribution.

Mia Wasikowska, **Sarah Gadon**, **Olivia Williams**, newcomer **Evan Bird** and **John Cusack** round out the ensemble cast for *Maps to the Stars*.

The indie thriller that offers a ghost story and a critique of celebrity-obsessed society in Los Angeles is set to shoot in July in Toronto and Los Angeles.

Maps to the Stars marks Prospero's fourth collaboration with Cronenberg, most recently on *A Dangerous Method* and *Cosmopolis*, which also starred Pattinson and Gadon.

The film is being produced by Katz and SBS Productions' **Saïd Ben Saïd**.

Sentient Entertainment's **Renee Tab**, Cronenberg's manager, will executive produce.

Integral Films' **Alfred Hurmer** is co-producing. THR

OUI, I DID SAY THAT!

A look at who's saying what at the festival

"If as an actress you take a project from the development stage, you have to find a character that's about 10 years older than you are to make sure you don't have to give up the character through old age."

OLIVIA WILLIAMS
The Last Days on Mars actress, on the particular care women need to take when choosing projects

"I did warn every guy on the crew: This is not something you can unsee. You're all welcome to look, but you can't unring that bell."

MATT DAMON
The Beyond the Candelabra actor, on baring his backside in the Steven Soderbergh film

"What's got two thumbs, speaks French and has so far not been particularly impressive with its efforts as a director? Moi."

JAMES FRANCO
The *As I Lay Dying* helmer, speaking about his past directorial efforts

"#Cannes Review Glossary: Deliberately paced = boring. Elliptical = makes no sense. Transgressive = Naked teenagers. Bresson = bad acting."

DUSTY SMITH
The Roadside Attractions vp of acquisitions, sharing his interpretation of the language used in reviews of festival fare

"This week, we started a new film fund. One of my clients started an umbrella cartel and is funding it off of all the umbrellas he sold this week."

PETER TRINH
The ICM Partners agent, joking at a panel about film financing about the incessant rain during the early days of the festival

Cannes Competition at the Midpoint: Americans Lead the Pack *By Todd Mccarthy*

It's been Yankees, oui, everyone else comme ci, comme ça, at the Cannes Film Festival as the annual cinematic orgy on the Croisette rolls into its homestretch.

Although there are still more than a half-dozen films left to be unveiled, the competition has generally been filled with underachievers thus far, with one international auteur after another generally delivering less than his or her best.

The exception has been the American entrants, as both the **Coen** brothers, with *Inside Llewyn Davis*, and **Steven Soderbergh**, with *Behind the Candelabra*, turned up at the top of their games. Both are somewhat smaller films than their directors, all previous Palme d'Or winners, often make, and both are set in the past and feature significant musical components.

In the sidebar sections, American filmmakers have scored as well, with **James Franco** surprising many with his focused, intelligent adaptation of **William Faulkner** in *As I Lay Dying*, while **Jeremy Saulnier** has served up one of the hotter films in the Directors' Fortnight with the low-budget crime melodrama *Blue Ruin*.

However, the Italians have something to be excited about in **Paolo Sorrentino**'s *The Great Beauty*, about a journalist caught up in the Roman social swirl, that sweeps the audience along with an intoxicating combination of dazzling camerawork, gorgeous settings and *La Dolce Vita*-inspired ennui. It's a formidable piece of filmmaking.

Among the other competition entries, Iranian director **Asghar Farhadi**'s French drama *The Past* impressed with its insightful look at a woman's problems with her ex-husband, present mate and kids, even if it doesn't match the power of the director's last film, *A Separation*.

A reasonably good reception also went to **Francois Ozon**'s *Young & Beautiful*, about a 17-year-old living a secret life as a prostitute.

Three Asian entries, **Jia Zhangke**'s *A Touch of Sin*, **Kore-eda Hirokazu**'s *Like Father, Like Son* and **Takashi Miike**'s *Shield of Straw*, had their partisans, particularly among devotees of their directors, but generally were seen as mid-level accomplishments.

Some found aspects of Dutch director **Alex van Warmerdam**'s characteristically weird and troubling *Borgman* to their liking, but it didn't generally rate high marks.

As I Lay Dying

Bringing up the rear at this point are **Arnaud Desplechin**'s English-language *Jimmy P. (Psychotherapy of a Plains Indian)*, starring **Benicio del Toro** and **Mathieu Almaric** in a therapy-dominated drama set in post-WWII Kansas, and **Amat Escalante**'s ultra-violent, roundly disliked Mexican drama *Heli*.

For cultists and cinephiles with roots in the 1970s, one of the pleasures of the Directors' Fortnight has been the reemergence of cult surrealist and all-around wild man **Alejandro Jodorowsky**, who turned up with the autobiographical *The Dance of Reality* and also in conjunction with **Frank Pavich**'s beguiling documentary about the Chilean director's unrealized sci-fi epic, *Jorodorowsky's Dune*.

Otherwise, the sidebar sections have been sufficiently bereft of genuine excitement that many observers have been talking less about the films' qualities and more about the hefty dose of explicit sex, particularly in **Alain Guiraudie**'s hardcore, homoerotic Un Certain Regard entry *Stranger by the Lake*. There's also word that **Abdellatif Kechiche**'s upcoming competition entry *Blue Is the Warmest Color* is loaded with explicit lesbian sex scenes involving **Lea Seydoux** and **Adele Exarchopoulos**.

Obviously, there's still plenty more to see at Cannes this year. THR

GETTY IMAGES (2)

CANNESDEALS

KA-CHING!
WHO'S INKING ON THE DOTTED LINE AT THE FESTIVAL

Tsui Hark's *Detective Dee* Prequel Sells Wide

By Patrick Brzeski

Hong Kong director **Tsui Hark**'s *Young Detective Dee: Rise of the Sea Dragon* — the hotly anticipated prequel to the Hong Kong veteran's 2010 smash hit, *Detective Dee and the Mystery of the Phantom Flame* — has sold to France (Wild Side) and across Asia, including India (IOF Entertainment), the Middle East (Gulf Film), Thailand (IPA Asia Pacific), the Philippines (Suraya Filem Production & Distribution), Korea, Russia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam and Taiwan (buyers for the latter territories have not yet been disclosed).

The first *Detective Dee* film, an action-heavy Sherlock Holmes-style mystery set in ancient China, earned $46.9 million in the country — then a towering sum for a non-Hollywood production. It was co-produced by China's **Huayi Brothers** and Hong Kong's Film Workshop. The prequel is produced exclusively by Huayi Brothers as a full Chinese production. According to several plot summaries that have circulated widely online (but haven't been confirmed by Huayi), the prequel tells the story of lead character Dee Renjie's coming-of-age enlistment in the imperial police force and his first case investigating a mysterious sea monster, before the story takes various turns involving subterfuge in the very highest reaches of the Imperial family. Testament to the project's pan-Asian market ambitions, the cast includes Taiwanese actor **Mark Chao** (in the lead as Dee), Hong Kong model-turned-actress **Angela Baby**, Hong Kong star **Carina Lau**, mainland Chinese actors **William Feng** and **Lin Gengxin**, and Korean actor **Kim Bum**. Hong Kong megastar **Andy Lau**, however, isn't attached this time. "*It's Young Detective Dee*, so we cast a young, very hot, actor [in Lau's place]; that exciting casting announcement will be made closer to the film's release," says a representative of Huayi Brothers. *Young Detective Dee: Rise of the Sea Dragon* is currently in postproduction and will be out in 2013, according to Huayi.

Detective Dee

Zentropa, Nordisk Unite for Viking Epic

Scandinavian production giants Zentropa and Nordisk Film are uniting to make Viking epic *The Long Ships*, an ambitious adventure tale based on the novel of the same name by **Frans Gunnar Bengtsson**. The book, one of Sweden's bestselling novels, has been translated into 24 languages. It is the story of Red Orm, a 10th-century Norseman living in the pre-Christian nation of Scania. **Peter Aalbaek Jensen** and **Sisse Graum Jorgensen** of Zentropa, who teamed on **Susanne Bier**'s Oscar winner *In a Better World* (2010), will produce *The Long Ships*, with **Lone Korslund** of Nordisk Film executive producing. Korslund's credits at Nordisk include the original *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* (2009).

Metrodome Takes Lukas Moodysson's *We Are the Best!*

We Are the Best!, the new film from acclaimed Swedish director **Lukas Moodysson** (*Lilya 4-Ever*), is gathering steam in Cannes with Metrodome snatching up U.K. rights to the 1980s period piece after seeing a three-minute promo screened by sales agent TrustNordisk. Metrodome, which released Moodysson's *Lilya 4-Ever* and *Together in Britain*, was the first to board the in-production feature, which is based on the graphic novel of the same name by Moodysson's wife, **Coco**, a well-known comics artist in Sweden. The film follows three young misfits growing up in 1980s Stockholm.

U.K.'s Rainmark Films Partners With Germany's Beta for Nordic Crime Thriller

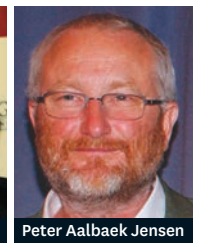
U.K. producers **Tracey Scoffield** and **Frank Doelger** are partnering with Germany's Beta to produce a big-screen version of **Derek B. Miller**'s international novel *Norwegian by Night*. The novel follows 82-year-old widower and ex-Marine **Sheldon Horowitz** who, having grudgingly moved to Oslo with his granddaughter and her Norwegian husband, witnesses the murder of a woman in his apartment complex and goes on the run. The deal was struck with Miller's literary agency Janklow & Nesbit and is currently in development with a director soon to be attached.

Fox Star Studios Boards Anurag Kashyap's *Bombay Velvet*

Fox Star Studios India will partner with Phantom Films to produce **Anurag Kashyap**'s next film, *Bombay Velvet*. The film, which stars top actor **Ranbir Kapoor** and actress **Anushka Sharma**, will begin shooting in July and will be released worldwide on Dec. 25, 2014. The first instalment of a planned trilogy, *Bombay Velvet* is the story of how the city (now called Mumbai) became a metropolis, set against the backdrop of love, greed, violence and jazz, spanning from the '50s to the early '70s. "*Bombay Velvet* is my first film in a trilogy about *Bombay*, before it became a metropolis. It's a story that has always fascinated me and we have been developing it for about four years, and I am very excited that now it's fully ready and we begin shooting this year," says Kashyap, whose latest directorial outing, *Ugly*, just screened at Cannes.

Anurag Kashyap
Fox has boarded the auteur's next film.

Roger L. Simon


Peter Aalbaek Jensen

Roger L. Simon to Pen *The Future of Now*

Oscar-nominated screenwriter **Roger L. Simon** will pen the script for *The Future of Now*, the second feature from newly launched Primeridian Entertainment. **Arcadiy Golubovich**, a principal of Primeridian, will make his directorial debut with the dystopian drama. His Primeridian partner, **Tim O'Hair**, will produce. Primeridian is fully financing the Washington, D.C.-set pic, with casting slated for June and shooting aiming for fall. The author of 10 novels, Simon was nominated for an Academy Award for best screenplay for 1989's *Enemies: A Love Story.* He also received a screenplay credit for *A Better Life*, which led to a best actor Oscar nomination for its star **Demian Bichir.** Just days earlier at the fest, Primeridian announced its first feature, based on the life of Nobel Prize-winning Russian author **Alexander Solzhenitsyn**, would be directed by **Cyrus Nowrasteh** (*The Day Reagan Was Shot)*. The new company aims to produce two to four films per year.

Correction: Black Mask Productions is not handling sales for *The Gunman*. Studiocanal is handling all sales for the film.

GETTY IMAGES (3)

THE 2013 CANNES POSTER AWARDS

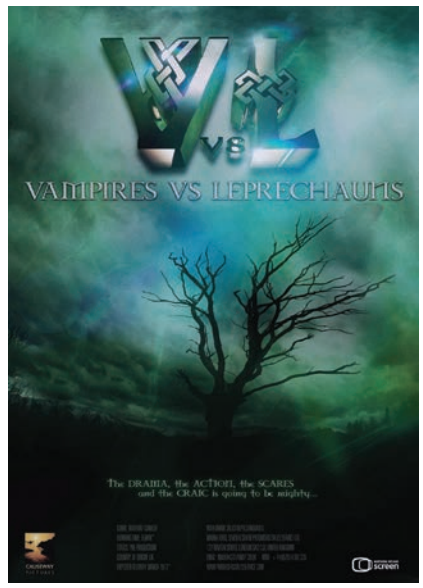
Vampire Edition

THR pays tribute to the most, um, distinctive posters at the market

BEST REMAKE

***My Stepbrother Is a Vampire!?!* (USA)**

It's 2013's answer to *The Brady Bunch*, only Greg is a vampire who has killed Bobby and Peter, Mike has married his mother, and Alice is a cat.



BEST GRUDGE MATCH

***Vampires vs. Leprechauns* (U.K.)**

It's the ultimate matchup, of course, but who will win? Vampires can fly and hypnotize people and have superhuman strength, but leprechauns can dance and mend shoes. Oh, it is on!

BEST DENTAL WORK

***Vampiros Paramilitares* (Colombia)**

How to make a movie poster about Colombian vampires masquerading as paramilitary killers? Get a red Mark Rothko painting, add jungle silhouettes, and glue on an upper denture heisted from a vampire old folks' home.

BEST VIAGRA ALTERNATIVE FOR VAMPIRES

***Vamp U* (USA)**

For some reason, Andy Samberg turned down the lead in this opus about a vampire who can't get a dental erection and seeks inspiration from sorority girl Julie Gonzalo. They shoulda stuck with the original title, Dr. Limptooth. — MICHAEL RUBINER

New Chinese Film Talents Forum Selects A Winner

By Patrick Brzeski

Call it reading the tea leaves or simple film business savvy, the Cannes Marche du Film co-launched its first New Chinese Film Talents Forum this year, flying in six aspiring Chinese filmmakers for a three-day training and pitch contest aimed at giving the directors insight into the tastes and expectations of the international market.

"It has been a wonderful initiative, to help [these directors] understand better how to push for their films to be distributed around the world," said **Jerome Paillard**, executive director of the Cannes Film Market at a press conference Tuesday just moments before the winning director was announced.

Turning to the directors on-stage, he added: "And for us too, it's very important to understand your culture and how we can work with you, which is not so easy — we have very different cultures. But we know that in the future, we want to — and will have to — work closely together. This event is a very strong and important sign of that collaboration."

Director **Dong Chengguan** was announced as the pitch contest's first winner, for his project *Love Changes the World*, a period fantasy film with a prospective budget of $10 million. Dong has worked previously in the art department of acclaimed Chinese auteur **Zhang Yimou**.

Michelle Lee, president of Champs Lis International, a co-sponsor of the event along with the China Film Producers Association, said that there was no cash prize for the winner this year, but that she is hopeful participation in the program will help the directors secure meetings with producers, agents and film funds during their stay in Cannes. She also said the Chinese Film Talents Fund Forum has made a three-year commitment to Cannes and hopes to build on the success of the first forum in the years ahead. THR

About Town

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1 Burlesque star Dita Von Teese (with tattoo artist Mark Mahoney, who has a part in *Blood Ties*) wore Vivienne Westwood to the Cointreau & Nikki Beach Present Dita Von Teese event.

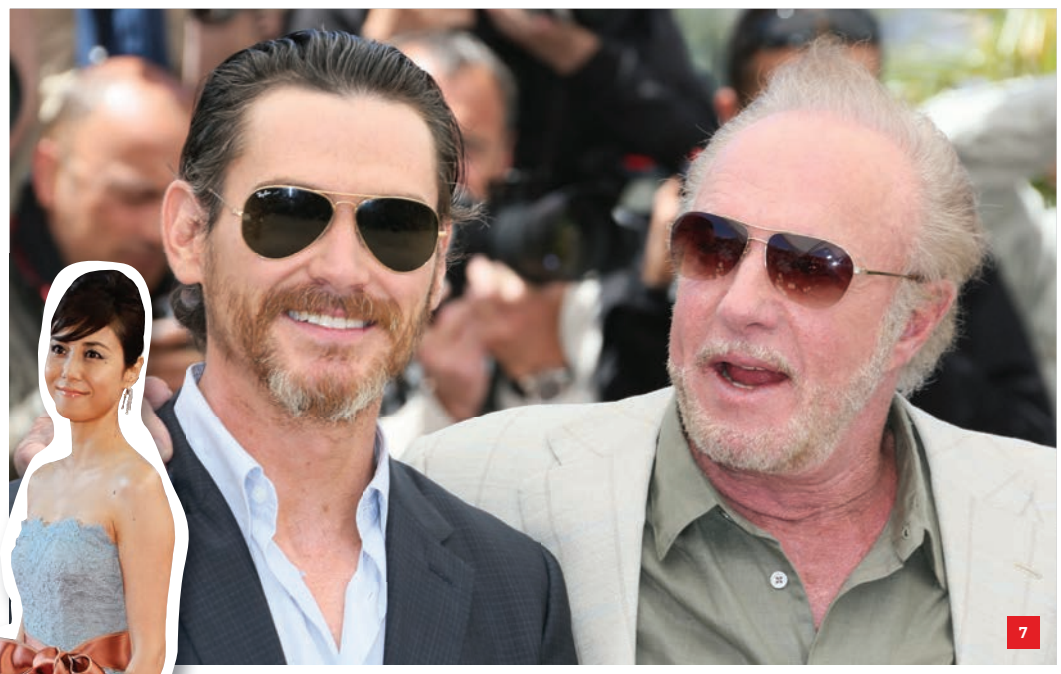
2 Marion Cotillard, who stars in partner Guillaume Canet's *Blood Ties*, hit the carpet for the film's premiere.

3 From left: IMDb founder Col Needham; Roger Ebert's widow, Chaz Ebert; and *Only God Forgives* director Nicolas Winding Refn at IMDb's 2013 Cannes Film Festival dinner.

4 Alec Baldwin, whose *Seduced and Abandoned* is screening at the festival, was joined by his pregnant wife, Hilaria, at the *Blood Ties* premiere.

5 From left: *As I Lay Dying*'s Ahna O'Reilly (in Monique Lhuillier), James Franco and Tim Blake Nelson at the Art of Elysium Paradis party. The event honored O'Reilly, who also stars in Un Certain Regard selection *Fruitvale Station*.

6 Rosario Dawson (in Elie Saab) climbed the steps of the Palais for the *As I Lay Dying* premiere.



7 Billy Crudup (left) joined his *Blood Ties* co-star James Caan at a cocktail party hosted by Dior in honor of the film on the rooftop of Club by Albane. Caan plays Crudup's father in the out-of-competition entry.

8 Gilles Lellouche (left, with *Blood Ties* star Clive Owen) came out to support his friend director Guillaume Canet at the Club by Albane party for the film.

9 From left: Director Johnnie To was flanked by his stars Andy Lau and Sammi Cheng at the photocall for their Midnight Screenings entry *Blind Detective*.

10 *Shield of Straw* star Nanako Matsushima came out for the Palme d'Or nominee's premiere.

11 Beth Grant, who plays the matriarch at the center of the James Franco-directed *As I Lay Dying*, attended the film's photocall.

FASHTRACK

What to buy, wear and know now

by Merle Ginsberg

The interior of the new Armani Caffe.

The restaurant is near The Grand Hotel.

Armani's Arrival Perks Up the Croisette

Jessica Chastain in Armani at the 2013 Oscars.

Tonight, Cannes' first-ever Giorgio Armani collection boutique and restaurant opens at 42 La Croisette, with Giorgio's niece **Roberta Armani** hosting a private cocktail party likely to draw **Jessica Chastain**, a designer loyalist who wore Armani Prive to the Oscars this year. The new space covers about 6,000 square feet, including the separate restaurant next door. The boutique's floors are made of greige-colored stones, with the walls done in Marmorino plaster finished in a silver color to match the ceiling. The tables are in dark painted teak with black glass tops, while the accessories area that dominates the entrance has transparent shelves that create the impression that the soft leather bags and shoes displayed upon them are floating in air. The restaurant, which can accommodate 70, has a large outdoor terrace for the requisite people-watching, mostly done in natural teak; the walls are covered in leatherette. All the chairs are by Armani Casa in customized fabrics. Wear your best greige Armani to lunch, and you'll blend right in.

DRESS DU JOUR

MILLA JOVOVICH

in Chanel Couture

Some say the *Resident Evil* actress' Chanel couture spring 2013 black, white and red floral sequin gown is the darker version of *Vogue* editor **Anna Wintour**'s Met Ball white Chanel — but we much prefer Milla's yoked version in this color combo.

Cannes *Colorful* Hommes

While walking the Palais stairs requires men to become a penguinized blur of black tails and bow ties, daytime and late night allow for a very different range of looks, from white suits and blue-hued attire to Leo's ubiquitous face-hiding Irish cap

Leonardo DiCaprio
He wore a navy T-shirt and hid beneath a cap at the Gotha club.

Adrien Brody
The actor wore a shiny ink-blue Roberto Cavalli suit to the *Vanity Fair*/Chanel dinner.

Joel Edgerton
His tight white suit at the *Gatsby* photocall was by Salvatore Ferragamo.

Baz Luhrmann
His *Gatsby*-like pretty blue blazer balanced out his light navy chinos.

James Franco
He displayed an all-Gucci-all-the-time wardrobe at Cannes, going from black to blue for daytime.

★ **Bronx** (Paris) www.bronx.fr

About Town

RAMBLING REPORTER

By Gary Baum, Merle Ginsberg & Sharon Swart

Yachtin' and Talkin'

Socialite **Denise Rich** held a dinner on her yacht, Lady Joy, to fete her friend **James Toback** following the Monday premiere of his new film with **Alec Baldwin**, *Seduced and Abandoned*. A post-dinner parade of celebratory toasts of the director competed with blasting dance music and flashing lights emanating from a neighboring Old Port boat, Perla Blu, owned by "a major Wynn [casinos] client" and filled with partying young kids. It was so loud that one of the guests, right-wing European gadfly **Taki Theodoracopulos** — who makes an appearance in the movie, about the process of raising money for projects at Cannes — finally lost it when it came time for his speech, shouting half-jokingly across the water to the other yacht mid-encomium, "I wish those f—ers would shut the f—up!" **Paris Hilton** subsequently visited both boats.

Weintraub

Design for Living

HBO's *Behind the Candelabra* offers a candid glimpse into Liberace's late-life domestic living arrangement with his personal driver, **Scott Thorson**. The 75-year-old **Jerry Weintraub**, its producer, offered a candid glimpse of his own late-life domestic living arrangement at the dinner he hosted to celebrate the film on Monday night at Le Cap, not far from the Hotel du Cap in Antibes. Director **Steven Soderbergh**, his stars **Michael Douglas** and **Matt Damon**, writer **Richard LaGravenese** and HBO programming president **Michael Lombardo** all were present — along with not only Weintraub's 89-year-old wife, **Jane**, but his longtime companion (and Jane's now good friend), fortysomething **Susie Ekins**, too. (They were seated on either side of him. He went public with their arrangement in his 2010 memoir). His other constant companion, a service dog in a blue vest, was making the rounds of the dinner, too.

Hervey at the May 20 *Blood Ties* premiere.

No Do-Overs for Hervey

Lady Victoria Hervey, the British aristocrat with a penchant for posing, took to the Palais steps for the *Blood Ties* premiere on Monday in a gold gown by Dubai-based designer **Robert Abi Nader** that she had the designer personally fly in overnight from the Middle East. Hervey walked the red carpet but forgot to turn around and catch the bank of paparazzi on the other side. When she realized her oversight, Hervey tried to go back — but guards told her she couldn't have a do-over in front of the international press.

Oops, sorry, Tom!

Timberlake at the *Inside Llewyn Davis* premiere May 19.

Timberlake's Tux Flux

Seems **Justin Timberlake** has pulled an **Anne Hathaway**. You may remember on Oscar day that **Valentino** sent out a press release saying the actress would be wearing one of his dresses, only for her to show up in **Prada**. Hathaway soon apologized publicly to her friend. Fast-forward to Cannes, where **Tom Ford**, who designed and styled all the suits for Timberlake's "Suit & Tie" video, issued a release trumpeting that he was the singer-actor's tux designer for the May 19 premiere of his *Inside Llewyn Davis*. Alas, J.T. showed up in Balenciaga. Neither Ford nor the star's stylist, **Estee Stanley** (who also dresses his wife, **Jessica Biel**), could be reached for comment.

Dray

Pop-ups Take Over

For the opening of Agent Provocateur's first lingerie boutique in Cannes Friday night, models in lacy underthings struck come-hither poses in the window, re-enacting Amsterdam's red-light district, while a female DJ spun tunes — in pricey skivvies, *naturellement*. The tableau was the concept of one man behind the scenes of so many Cannes goings-on it's hard to keep count, from film business parties to the visuals of the opening- and closing-night ceremonies to product launches and events for Dior, Boucheron, Nespresso and Chivas: **Antoine Dray**, a former fashion show producer from Paris who staged shows for **Raf Simons**, **John Galliano** and **Veronique Branquino** before relocating with his wife, **Catherine** (now his partner in ADR), and children to Cannes for "a better quality of life."

Dray is also behind oddly named pop-up club B.O. (*bande originale* is the French term for soundtrack) over at the Five — the five-star, high-design boutique hotel on rue Notre Dame — that has been host every night to all manner of mostly French film and tv execs. Last year, Dray produced **David Lynch**'s Club Silencio in the same space. B.O. is a preview of a concept club **Luc Besson** will open in June in his new Le City du Cinema studio outside of Paris.

"We are always looking for reinvention here in Cannes," Dray tells *THR*. "We organized as many as 30 parties in like 10 days. But this year I sense a change in the atmosphere here: There is more stress — and less money — due to economic times. When the recession began five years ago, the chocolate fountains started to dry up. This year it's the Champagne!"

Power Lunch

Keanu Reeves broke bread at the Carlton with *A Man of Tai Chi* producer **Lemore Syvan** and execs from Universal and the China Film Group. … *Fruitvale Station*'s **Octavia Spencer** hit the JW Marriott lounge. … Sony Pictures Classics' chiefs **Tom Bernard** and **Michael Barker** visited Carlton Beach. Millennium Films head **Avi Lerner** was in at another time. … Toronto Film Festival artistic director **Cameron Bailey** held court at Le Riad as Indian star **Anil Kapoor** sat nearby. … Sierra-Affinity CEO **Nick Meyer** took a seat at Café Florian. … WME's **Craig Kestel** took to the JW Marriot restaurant.

El Riad

Spencer

Meyer

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The Hollywood Reporter

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"I thought of the movies I loved by the Italians in the '40s — *Bicycle Thieves*, *Shoeshine*. So I thought what would an opera be called if it were your story? *The Immigrant*," says Gray. "To those who think it's bland, it's really not, because it lets the movie do the talking."

James Gray

Cannes keeps inviting him back, but the director admits a fondness for Venice, confesses he didn't know Marion Cotillard's films and advises travelers to never check their luggage By Gregg Kilday

EVEN THOUGH HE'S JUST 44, James Gray will be bringing his fourth film to the Cannes competition on Friday when he unveils *The Immigrant*. The film stars Marion Cotillard as a Polish immigrant who arrives in New York City's Ellis Island in 1921, quickly falls under the sway of a small-time pimp — played by Gray regular Joaquin Phoenix — and then looks to a magician (Jeremy Renner), to rescue her. Gray, who lives in Los Angeles with his wife, documentary filmmaker Alexandra Dickson, and their three small children, spoke with *THR* about what led up to his fourth trip down the red carpet.

How long have you been playing with the idea for *The Immigrant*?
I was working on another project, which never got made, and as is so often the case my mind started to wander. My grandparents used to tell me stories about their trip to Ellis Island from Russia and life on the Lower East Side of New York. My brother had discovered a whole treasure trove of family history not long ago that he shared with me and I thought, "What a great subject for a movie some day."

With all the immigrant stories you could tell, how did you settle on this particular one?
There were stories that my grandfather had told us about a character named Max Hochstim, who was a very mercurial and enigmatic guy, a pimp who had small-time connections to Tammany Hall and to Ellis Island, and that's how he would recruit women. But I thought to make a movie about that guy would be pretty spirit-crushing, because he was such a dark and miserable person. But I thought if I make the movie about one of his victims, that might be more interesting, especially since so few films are about women and are from a woman's point of view. And then in doing the research I found this wonderful photograph by a photographer called Lewis Hine of a young woman in the great hall at Ellis Island. Her face meant so much to me — it was so evocative.

This is your fourth movie with Joaquin Phoenix. It's turning into one of the great actor-director partnerships.
I never, of course, set out to steal from the idea of Toshiro Mifune and Kurosawa or De Niro and Scorsese. I simply enjoyed working with him so much. I found him so intelligent that he seemed to understand what I was going to tell him before I even said it. It's a very rare thing. So when you find someone like that, you keep on going back to them.

How did you cast Marion Cotillard?
I had never seen anything she'd been in. She is the life partner of Guillaume Canet, who wanted me to help translate dialogue for this movie *Blood Ties*, which is showing in Cannes ironically enough. We would go out to dinner, and so I met her, and I thought she has such an amazing face. My wife said, "You don't know who that is? She's an actor, she's won an Oscar." I know it seems unlikely, but when you have young children, you really never go to the movies. We have a 7, 5 and 3-year-old. But I loved her face and I loved her attitude because she was quiet, but she had a total feistiness that somehow came through anyway. And her whole role is conceived as someone who says very little, but somehow conveys will.

Your previous movies have been very contemporary, but here you're doing a period piece that's more melodramatic. Why the shift in tone?
I had been to see an opera, Puccini's *Il Trittico*, directed by William Friedkin in L.A., which includes the one-act opera *Suor Angelica*. It seemed so emotional. There was no wall between you and the story, you and the characters. It was unabashedly direct emotionally. And I thought, "That's something very beautiful to pursue for a film."

Your background is Russian Jewish. Why make your heroine a Polish Catholic?
Most Polish immigrants at that time were Roman Catholic. I thought that's interesting, because the Catholic tradition is so rooted in redemption, in the possibility of forgiveness. All of these things played into the conception of film in a very beautiful way, because I had been inspired by that Puccini opera, which is about a nun. Also she would be a total outsider, even when she came to the Lower East Side. It would flip the conversation on its head for her to be an outsider there. But mostly because of this notion of redemption.

So were you hoping for another slot at Cannes?
Not at all. In fact I had hoped to be getting the film ready for Venice last year, but that couldn't happen because the movie has quite a bit of effects work. So then it was a question of going to Berlin or Cannes. Most of the money came from Wild Bunch, and they said, "If we can get in Cannes, let's do that." At least in America, the narrative is I'm a Cannes favorite. But, in fact, I've had my best experience in Venice, both with the audience and the jury. It's an unbelievable honor to be invited to the Cannes competition, but it's never been by design.

Do you have any Cannes rituals?
I do two things now. One, I always bring my clothing with me in a garment bag. I never check it, because the first three times I went, it got lost. The second thing: have no expectations. The first time, with *The Yards*, I certainly didn't think I would win the Palme d'Or, but I certainly didn't think I would be booed. The response was very mixed, and I was so profoundly disappointed. So now I just hope some people enjoy the film, and I'm going to enjoy the fact that I'm there. THR

VITAL STATS

Nationality American
Born April 14, 1969
Film in Cannes
The Immigrant, in competition, May 24
Selected Filmography *Little Odessa* (1994), *The Yards* (2000), *We Own the Night* (2007), *Two Lovers* (2008)
Notable awards Critics Award, 1994 Deauville Film Festival, *Little Odessa*; Silver Lion, 1994 Venice Film Festival, *Little Odessa*

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Fan Bingbing
Martinez Ballroom
May 18 | 8:46 PM

The Chinese film and fashion superstar donned a Valentino lace floral gown for *The Hollywood Reporter*'s party honoring her as *THR*'s International Artist of the Year.

CANNES DIARY 2013

Jewels were stolen, shots were fired and the weather was horrid, but the stars still shined at the 66th Cannes Film Festival as Hollywood A-listers, fashion icons and international auteurs mixed it up with the moneymen during the most important two weeks of the cinema calendar

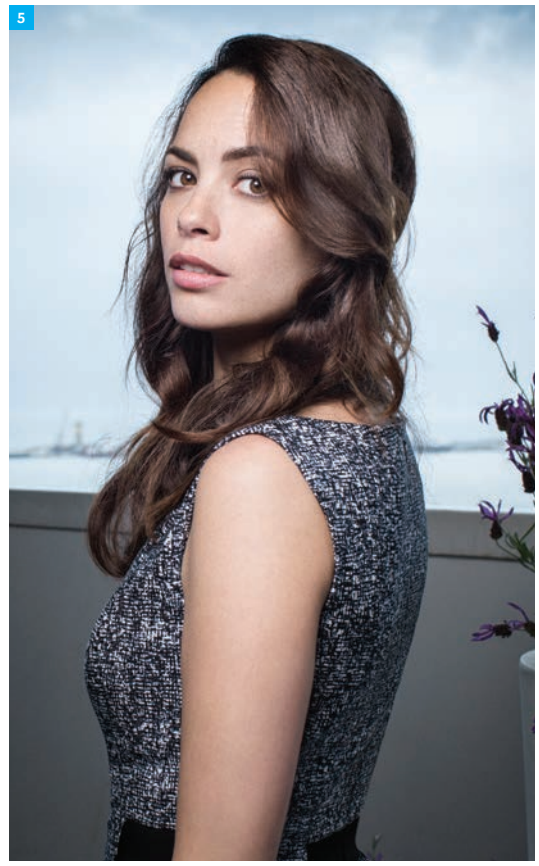
PHOTOGRAPHED BY Fabrizio Maltese
PHOTO PORTFOLIO PRODUCED BY Jennifer Laski

From left **Michael Douglas, Matt Damon and Jerry Weintraub**
Hotel du Cap-Eden-Roc
May 19 | 2:08 PM

Damon and Douglas play lovers in Steven Soderbergh's competition entry *Beyond the Candelabra*. After the two had finished filming a particularly intimate sex scene, says Damon: "There is a long pause … and everybody has their heads down. And you just hear Steven go, 'I have no notes.' "

"I DON'T GO TO BE IN CANNES. I'M JUST USUALLY IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE AT THIS TIME OF YEAR. I'LL GO IN TO SEE FRIENDS, GO TO THE DU CAP. I'M LUCKY IN THAT RESPECT."
Weintraub

"WORKING IN FRANCE, I HAD MORE SERENITY OR SECURITY BECAUSE I KNEW I WAS MAKING THE FILM I WANTED AND THAT THE FILM WOULD BE SEEN, WHICH IS NOT ALWAYS THE CASE IN IRAN."
Farhadi



1 Marine Vacth
May 18 | 11:56 AM
Terrace Mouton Cadet

The French actress turned heads and a few tricks in Francois Ozon's competition entry *Young & Beautiful*, as a schoolgirl who becomes a prostitute.

2 *Fruitvale Station* director and cast
Gray d'Albion Residences
May 16 | 11:31 AM

Octavia Spencer (second from left, with her director Ryan Coogler, far left, and co-stars Michael B. Jordan and Melonie Diaz) spoke with *THR* about the responsibility to the real people behind the Un Certain Regard film, which looks at the shooting of Oscar Grant by Oakland police: "At the end of the day, these lives should not be so expendable," says Spencer.

3 Asghar Farhadi
Terrace Mouton Cadet
May 18 | 12:21 PM

The Iranian filmmaker's Cannes competition entry, *The Past*, his follow up to the Oscar-winning *A Separation*, was snatched up by Sony Pictures Classics in one of the big early deals of the festival. The complex melodrama about a French-Iranian family living in Paris has drawn critical raves and is considered a frontrunner for the Palme d'Or.

4 Tahar Rahim
Loft Design Gallery
May 17 | 4:35 PM

The French actor of Algerian descent wowed in 2009 with his startling performance as a crime boss in Jacques Audiard's *A Prophet*. His turn in Cannes competition entry *The Past* as a man caught between a Frenchwoman and the Iranian husband she is trying to divorce, was considerably lower-key but no less powerful.

5 Berenice Bejo
JW Marriott
Bulgari Terrace
May 18 | 12:47 PM

The French-Argentinian actress is back in Cannes two years on from *The Artist*, cast in Asghar Farhadi's festival entry *The Past*.

1 *We Are What We Are* director and cast
Resideal Premium Cannes
May 20 | 2:42 PM

Says director Jim Mickle (center, with, from left, his stars Bill Sage, Julia Garner and Wyatt Russell) of remaking the Mexican cannibal horror movie of the same name: "If we tried to top the Mexican version at their own game, it wouldn't really work."

2 Alain Fabien Delon
Nespresso Beach
May 20 | 3:31 PM

The son of French film legend Alain Delon has a role in Yann Gonzalez' *Les Rencontres d'Apres Minuit* (*You and the Night*), a lyrical sex comedy, which unspooled in Critics' Week.

3 Sami Gayle
JW Marriott
May 17 | 4:07 PM

The 17-year-old actress plays Robin Wright's daughter in the sci-fi adventure *The Congress*, which opened Cannes' Directors' Fortnight sidebar.

4 Dita Von Teese
Terrace Mouton Cadet
May 20 | 9:32PM

The burlesque star is considered one of the world's best-dressed women — at least until she becomes one of the world's best-undressed women. Von Teese was in town as a Courvoisier ambassador and performed at Nikki Beach May 20.

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"IN AMERICA, FILM IS ALL ABOUT BUSINESS. IN EUROPE, IT'S ALL ABOUT ART. IN HONG KONG, IT'S SORT OF BOTH. IT'S ALL MIXED TOGETHER. WE DON'T HAVE ANY RULES."
To
6

3

"YOU GET TO WEAR THINGS AT CANNES YOU COULD NEVER WEAR AT HOME. YOU CAN REALLY GO FOR IT." *Dita Von Teese*

4

7

5 Robin Wright
JW Marriott
May 17 | 4:07 PM

The *House of Cards* star plays a fictionalized version of herself in Ari Folman's biting, mostly animated Hollywood satire *The Congress*.

6 Johnnie To
Grey Goose Lounge, Grand Hotel
May 20 | 3:15 PM

The cult Hong Kong director's competition entry, *Blind Detective*, stars Andy Lau and Sammi Cheng as the sightless sleuth and his kung-fu fighting partner, reuniting the stars of To's 2004 *Yesterday Once More*.

7 *Ain't Them Bodies Saints* director and cast
Carlton Hotel
May 19 | 12:34PM

Director David Lowery's (far left, with his stars Rooney Mara and Casey Affleck) atmospheric crime drama screened in the Directors' Fortnight section.

***THR* CANNES VIDEO TEAM**
Raphael Laski, Christian Huguenot, Jennifer Laski, Stephanie Fischette, Tess Gomet, Pablo Teyssier-Verger, Olivier Calautti, Jerome Marti, Matthieu Moille and photo assistant Vanni Bassetti.

REPORTING BY
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SAMI GAYLE: MAKEUP & HAIR BY JOHNY SAADE FOR EAMGMT.COM USING ARDELL LASHES, SIGMA BEAUTY & LAPRAIRIE; HAIR PRODUCTS: RENÉ FURTERER

FOUNDER AND CEO, VOLGAFILM

Sergei Yershov

The distribution guru discusses bridging the gap between Russia and Hollywood, the lessons learned at Lionsgate and why he prefers L.A. over his native St. Petersburg By Kevin Cassidy

Yershov was photographed by Christopher Patey on April 30 in his office in Sherman Oaks.

INDIE DISTRIBUTOR VOLGAFILM WAS founded by Sergei Yershov after a five-year tenure as co-president at Lionsgate International. A native of St. Petersburg, Russia, Yershov took an unorthodox route to the movie business. He studied telemetry (the science of measuring results from a distance) in college before serving in the Russian military for two years. In 1991 he moved to Los Angeles and quickly landed a job as a producer's assistant. Twenty-two years later, Yershov's Volgafilm has offices in L.A., Moscow and the Ukraine that specialize in acquiring content for the rapidly expanding Russian market, including the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic states. To date the company has released 50 films theatrically and amassed a film and television library of more than 500 titles, including Hollywood fare like *Slumdog Millionaire*, *The Artist* and the *Hunger Games* franchise. The 46-year-old Yershov, who lives in L.A. with his wife and two daughters, talked to *THR* about his rocky start in the sales business, Hollywood's increasing attention to the Russian market and his Cannes strategy.

You arrived in L.A. in 1991 with no connections or experience in the film business. How did you get your start?

I got a job with a company called West Side Studios with a producer named **David Winters.** I became his apprentice in a way. I was the guy who would bring him his lunch. One day I said, "Would you please consider giving me a real job? I can do foreign sales." He laughed at me. But then he put me in a booth at a huge Polish film market, and I actually sold a film. He said, "Oh my God, this kid is talented. So let's fire that American guy and get this Russian guy for like half his salary."

How did you get from there to Lionsgate?

I was eventually hired at Trimark, which was then sold to Lionsgate.

What was that transition like?

It was a very difficult merger. My relationship with [Lionsgate CEO] Jon Feltheimer was very rocky from the start. I was very arrogant. He invited me for lunch, and I said, "Here's the library that you just bought, and I'm the only one who knows how to sell it." I thought he was going to fire me after lunch! But we worked together for like five years or so. I really wanted to have my own business. I really focused on that.

When you decided to strike out on your own with Volgafilm did anyone try to talk you out of it?

Everybody. Everyone asked, "How are you going to run this from L.A.?" It was very difficult. But I always had a vision to run a distributor. People in Russia ask me if I want to run a distribution company only in America, and I say, "No way." That's not my advantage. The company is based on my American experience combined with my understanding of Russia. That's a very successful way to merge this gap between the two.

How do you determine what will work in the Russian market?

We do a lot of research. We use Nielsen data to gauge what people are responding to. *The Hunger Games* is an example. It was untested. The book only sold 17,000 copies in Russia. Through the use of Nielsen tracking, we were able to identify, early on, that our young females were going to respond to it.

So how did you get the rights?

Everybody wanted it, but everybody had modest expectations. They paid 50 percent of the asking price, or 50 percent of the price that we paid. There were some bids that were climbing to 90 percent of what we paid. They were hesitant, but they were not as bullish as us. It was a very expensive proposition. It was an enormous budget, so the asking price was very high for the Russian market. Now, looking at the result, it was not that much to pay.

Is it hard to compete with the studios?

It's not very hard, to be honest. The output of the studios is fairly limited. There's a vast open space for independents. The problem that we have is that the space is a little bit overcrowded. Everyone and their uncle thinks they can start a distribution outlet. Every year in Cannes I meet a producer who is going to start another sales outlet. Inevitably all the efforts come screeching to a halt.

Does Hollywood not fully understand the Russian market?

They hire very experienced and very bright people in Russia. To say that would not be appropriate. Everybody is very interested. You can see how Hollywood is plunging talent into Russia for their promotional tours. From Tom Cruise to Arnold Schwarzenegger. Every week on the Russian talk shows there is an American star. We were one of the first ones to do this. We put Mickey Rourke on the Russian news in 2008. He was very spirited and flirted with the newscaster. It was a huge success in Russia and on the Internet afterwards.

What do you hope to accomplish in Cannes?

We're very strategic about Cannes. This particular Cannes, we're stocked up to the end of 2014. So we want to secure something for the beginning of 2015. We're chasing something that will be franchise-able. I doubt we'll find another *Hunger Games*; that would be absurd. I think I would know about it way in advance. Having an office in Los Angeles gives us a competitive advantage as we make the rounds 365 days a year with key producers, talent agencies and financiers in order to stay on top of great material. It doesn't matter where a project is going to pop up. If it's going to A, B or C sales agency — we've already read it.

After growing up in Russia, what is it like to live in L.A.?

I love it. In L.A. and the film business you have so many people that came from wherever, but they're united by the same thing. I don't find it annoying that every waiter wants to be a screenwriter or an actor. I find it inspiring. THR

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As Liberace, Douglas displays dazzlingly speedy fingering in the piano-playing sequences.

Behind the Candelabra

Steven Soderbergh's HBO film is a wonderfully entertaining and revealing look at Liberace's final decade BY TODD MCCARTHY

BEHIND THE CANDELABRA IS FABULOUS, SO MUCH SO that, were it not for the fact that it reveals everything about his private life that he worked so hard to conceal, Liberace himself might well have loved it. The big screen's loss is HBO's gain in what is billed as Steven Soderbergh's farewell to cinema, at least for the time being. Superbly scripted, brilliantly directed, smart but never smarmy and led by Michael Douglas in a performance so good you often forget you're watching an actor rather than the character he's playing, this is a rarity — a fully realized biographical drama shot through with real feeling and an abundance of sly humor. Playing in competition at Cannes despite having been made for HBO, where it will debut May 26 in the U.S., it's got a full-size movie look in every way, the only difference being that it's far better than most of what plays in cinemas these days.

The story spans the final decade of Liberace's life, from his meeting young Scott Thorson in 1977 to his death from an AIDS-related illness, which he tried to keep a secret, as he always had his sexual orientation.

"Oh, they have no idea he's gay," Thorson's buddy informs him at a Liberace show in Las Vegas attended by adoring female fans of a certain age. No matter the performer's outrageous fur coats, sequined garments, bejeweled fingers, immaculately coiffed hair and unbridled flamboyance, anyone old enough to remember Liberace's TV show and live appearances can testify to the sincere and unquestioned appeal he held for women in America as well as Britain. It really was another time.

Little did anyone suspect, then, that the handsome young chauffeur who nightly "drove" Liberace onstage in a gaudy Rolls-Royce actually was his bedmate in his celebrated Vegas mansion. The two come together at a fateful backstage meeting: out goes Liberace's "protege" — another pianist with whom he shares an onstage duet — and in comes Scott (Matt Damon), a blond and beefy teenager from a succession of foster families. "I promise to stay on my side of the bed," Liberace says upon encouraging him to sleep over, a promise kept until daybreak.

There is a slightly creepy predatory aspect to the behavior of "Lee," as the pianist was known to his friends, in his initial overtures to the kid; he's 58 to Scott's 18. But in Douglas' fulsome, wonderfully shaded performance, there also is a sweetness and seemingly genuine concern for the deprived life his hunky companion has led up to now, as well as an impulse to open up about some of his own trials and private issues (not to mention how he was initiated sexually in his native Wisconsin by a member of the Green Bay Packers).

Insisting at first that he's bisexual (as Lee later notes, there's never any evidence of this), Scott bristles at aspects of being a kept boy but offers little resistance to life at Liberace's monument to "palatial kitsch," a modern mansion stuffed with the most expensive gaudiness possible: endless mirrors, chandeliers, marble, chintzy furniture, glittering tuxedos and shining and shimmering objects of all kinds, as well as those key sites of their relationship, the indoor marble Jacuzzi and ample bed.

Eventually, Lee persuades Scott to have extensive plastic surgery, all supervised by a Dr. Feelgood type played by Rob Lowe in a hilariously squint-eyed performance. Explicit plastic surgery montages bounce to the accompaniment of upbeat, jaunty music — just one of Soderbergh's many inspired touches.

Within another couple of years, the couple has added cocaine use to their Champagne diet, and Lee develops a porn addiction and proposes that they should be free to see other men. The writing is on the wall, leading to Scott's eviction and his retaliatory $113 million palimony suit that brought the entertainer unwanted tabloid notoriety shortly before his death.

Richard LaGravenese's screenplay is outstanding both in its dramatic structure and line-by-line writing, particularly in the intimate scenes. He and Soderbergh also know how to darken the mood as gently as one might imperceptibly dial down a light dimmer.

Yes, Rex Harrison and Richard Burton played a couple of old queens in the best-forgotten *Staircase* in 1969, but to see two major stars such as Douglas and Damon go at it physically the way they do here is quite something. And impressive. Having from all appearances bounced back from his bout with cancer a couple of years back, Douglas looks great and acts it too in one of most electric and dialed-in performances he's ever given onscreen. He catches Liberace's self-deprecation, work ethic, generosity and spitefulness. Damon also is wonderful, expressing the lack of willpower that allows him to go along with his mate's wishes and eventually the festering resentment and rage that builds up.

In Competition
Cast *Michael Douglas, Matt Damon* // **Director** *Steven Soderbergh*
119 minutes

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Digital Magic	RIVIERA, Stand F9 - G8
Distribution Workshop (HK) Limited	Cormoran II, 3/F, Grand Residences, 45 La Croisette
Easternlight Films	LERINS, Stand R2
Edko Films Limited	RIVIERA, Stand C14-03
Emperor Motion Pictures	C41, 4/F., Relais de la Reine, 42/43 La Croisette
Entertaining Power Co. Ltd	RIVIERA, Stand B10 (CreateHK booth)
Film Mall Limited	RIVIERA, Stand B10 (CreateHK booth)
Film Plus	RIVIERA, Stand B10 (CreateHK booth)
Fortissimo Films	1st Floor, Apt. Zanzi, 5 Square Mérimée
Fortune Star Media Limited	RIVIERA, Stand C14-01
Golden Network Asia Limited	RIVIERA, Stand E15
Golden Scene Co. Limited	RIVIERA, Stand B10 (CreateHK booth)
Good Idea Movie Production Co. Ltd	RIVIERA, Stand B10 (CreateHK booth)
Media Asia Film	3rd Floor, 15 Square Mérimée
Mega-Vision Pictures Limited	RIVIERA, Stand B11-03
Pegasus Motion Pictures Distribution Limited	RIVIERA, Stand C9
Popular Lead Limited	RIVIERA, Stand B11-04
Star Alliance Movies (HK) Co. Ltd	RIVIERA, Stand B8
Universe Films Distribution Co. Ltd	RIVIERA, Stand B11-01
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Hong Kong Cinema at Cannes

Screenings

A Complicated Story
by Kiwi CHOW
EDKO FILMS LTD
May 20 16:00 PALAIS G (M)

Bends
by Flora LAU
DISTRIBUTION WORKSHOP (HK) LIMITED
May 18 14:00, 22:15 DEBUSSY THEATRE* (I)
May 19 13:00 BAZIN THEATRE* (I)
May 19 18:00 PALAIS H (M)
*Un Certain Regard for the 66th Festival de Cannes

Blind Detective
by Johnnie TO
MEDIA ASIA FILM
May 20 00:30 GRAND THEATRE*
*Out of Competition for the 66th Festival de Cannes

Burned Wings
by Kuo ZHENG
ALL RIGHTS ENTERTAINMENT LIMITED
May 21 12:00 PALAIS G (M)

Finding Mr. Right
by Xiao-lu XUE
EDKO FILMS LTD
May 18 09:45 PALAIS G (M)

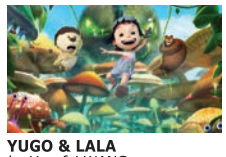
Ip Man - The Final Fight
by Herman YAU
EMPEROR MOTION PICTURES
May 17 15:30 ARCADES 3 (M)

Saving General Yang
by Ronny YU
PEGASUS MOTION PICTURES DISTRIBUTION LTD
May 21 18:00 OLYMPIA 7 (M)

The Adventures of Jinbao
by Leo LO
GOLDEN NETWORK ASIA LTD
May 15 18:00 RIVIERA 3 (M)
May 19 18:00 LERINS 2 (M)

The Silent War
by Alan MAK, Felix CHONG
MEI AH ENTERTAINMENT GROUP LIMITED
May 15 17:30 PALAIS F (M)

Wu Dang
by Patrick LEUNG
MEI AH ENTERTAINMENT GROUP LIMITED
May 16 11:30 PALAIS B (M)



YUGO & LALA
by Yun-fei WANG
GOLDEN NETWORK ASIA LTD
May 19 09:30 RIVIERA 4 (M)

(M) Market Screening (I) By Invitation Only

Cash (Parrack, left) and Darl (Franco) make the long trek to bury their mother.

As I Lay Dying

James Franco's tale of an impoverished Mississippi family is a startlingly effective adaptation of William Faulkner's challenging novel BY TODD MCCARTHY

James Franco has pulled off a devilishly difficult literary adaptation with this faithful yet cinematically vibrant version of William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*. Like the multiple English master's degree holder he is, Franco, with co-scripter Matt Rager, has wrestled to the ground the author's fragmented, multi-voiced tale of the ordeal an impoverished Mississippi family endures to bury its matriarch and emerged with something many have tried but few have delivered, a worthy screen adaptation of Faulkner. A rarefied art film all the way, one that will divide even brainy students and specialized cinema types, this is by a long way the best of the eight features the mind-bogglingly prolific actor-director-writer has made and is, as such, a big surprise.

For the average citizen, the 1930 novel is no easy read, and it often takes college students at least a couple of passes to make sense of everything, so parsimoniously does Faulkner dole out key information about identities, relationships and crucial events past and present. In addition, the narrative is presented through the perspectives of 15 different characters, from those of a little kid to the dead woman herself, assuring at least a degree of confusion and the need to page back and double-check details from time to time.

Just as formidable is the bare narrative itself, which concerns an effort of almost biblical severity and suffering endured by the dirt-poor Bundren clan as it fashions a homemade wooden coffin for Addie, the mother of four sons and one daughter, and takes it by wagon down dirt roads and across a river to a distant town. No one makes it to the destination in quite the condition in which they left.

So extreme is the hardship, and so stultifying the dull repetitions of physical labor, that one might have thought the only directors capable of reimagining the story for the screen would have been Bela Tarr or the Dardennes brothers. But Franco, employing diverse cinematic techniques from split screen to direct-to-camera address, makes the Bundrens' time of trial more immediately coherent than it is on the page without disrespecting Faulkner's oblique style.

Before Addie is even dead, strong-bodied son Cash (Jim Parrack) is sawing away outside their ramshackle rural cabin to prepare for what is clearly imminent. A rainstorm rolls and he still keeps at it, while wild, perpetually angry son Jewel (Logan Marshall-Green) ropes and tames a horse and son Darl drives the wagon off on a questionable errand that

Blind Detective

Hong Kong superstars Andy Lau and Sammi Cheng reunite for their seventh big-screen collaboration in Johnnie To's comedy thriller BY NEIL YOUNG

Hong Kong director Johnnie To's search for laughs takes him from cornea to cornier in *Blind Detective* (*Man Tam*), a cartoonishly broad mashup of genres that mistakes hectic shrillness for comic energy. But as the first collaboration of HK superstars Andy Lau and Sammi Cheng in nearly a decade, it has the makings of a solid summer box-office proposition in the territory — especially in the wake of To's 2012 money-spinner *Drug War*. Overseas commercial prospects are much dicier, but To's cultish reputation among international cinephiles makes it easy to envisage more than a smattering of festival bookings over the coming months.

This is the seventh collaboration between the versatile Lau and sparky Cheng, and their fourth with To — the last time the so-called "box-office golden team" worked together was 2004's *Yesterday Once More*. And while multi-award-winning singer-actor Lau has maintained his usual Stakhanovite work rate in the interim, "queen of pop" Cheng's big-screen appearances have been more intermittent — To's *Romancing in Thin Air* was touted last year as a "comeback" role.

And once more, the duo make for an appealing double act: Lau as former cop Chong (anglicized as "Johnston" in the Cannes subtitles) and Cheng as serving officer "Goldie" Ho. Chong/Johnston lost his sight four years ago. Since then, he's made a living from the bounties on long-abandoned cold cases. Chong/Johnston's heightened remaining senses are less of a factor in his success than his remarkable, quasi-supernatural powers of deduction, which involve projecting himself mentally into crime scenes to understand the thought processes of the perpetrators.

Chong (Lau) uses his heightened senses to solve crimes.

He schools Ho, who has lightning-quick reactions and bull's-eye aim, in his unorthodox approach — which sees the pair dressing up in all manner of

upsets his ineffectual, gape-mouthed pa Anse (Tim Blake Nelson). Teen daughter Dewey Dell (Ahna O'Reilly) tends to her mother, while cherubic young son Vardaman (Brady Permenter) struggles to carry a huge catfish he's somehow come by.

The images and impressions are doled out quickly, sometimes in duplicate or opposition to one another but not, happily, in an academic way; it all flows nicely while gently dispensing morsels about family secrets (some of the kids have different fathers, and Dewey may have a condition to deal with).

Once Addie dies, she's quickly placed in the neatly made coffin for the trip to Jefferson, which Anse insists upon and might not have been so difficult if the bridge across the river hadn't been wiped out by the rising currents from the recent rains. Bad judgment and general bungling lead to disaster all around, especially for Cash, who has to endure two days of travel in a springless wagon riding atop his mother's coffin in the sun with his shattered lower leg in a concrete-covered splint. No big issue, he confidently says.

After fleeing a dreadful barn fire while staying overnight at a farm, they finally arrive in town, although the stench from the coffin makes them very unwelcome by the locals. Still, they stay long enough to tend to some diverse essential business, mostly of a dubious nature.

It's a strange and loaded tale, to be sure, one that never had the makings of a popular film for a wide public but which, for connoisseurs of literary adaptations and cinematic challenges, poses significant interest. Franco's storytelling is confident and sure-handed, both with the camera, which, in the capable hands of Christina Voros, roams around to capture privileged moments, and the actors, who all seem to have seized their characters with their entire beings.

Lending eerie ambiance is an electronic score by Kim O'Keefe that ranges from the atonal to the purely atmospheric.

Un Certain Regard
Cast *James Franco, Tim Blake Nelson, Danny McBride, Logan Marshall-Green, Ahna O'Reilly*
Director *James Franco // 110 minutes*

zany costumes as they immerse themselves in their "roles" like overzealous method actors. The actual crimes under investigation, which include a morgue murder and a serial killer targeting lovelorn young women, are primarily an excuse for elaborate, spookily lit flashbacks and incongruous bloody violence, especially in a third-act sequence in a psychopath's charnel-house lair.

At such junctures, To relies heavily on Lau's and Cheng's well-established screen presence, though even this expert duo are sometimes allowed to go too over the top, just as some of the supporting performances cross from the broad to the embarrassingly amateurish. It doesn't help that two actors, including Zi Yi in the quite important role of Chong/Johnston's ex-partner "Szeto Fatbo," have had their lines awkwardly dubbed by other performers.

This quaint relic of old-style East Asian cinema stands in contrast to the widescreen slickness of Siu Keung Cheng's widescreen cinematography, which exerts appeal throughout this punishingly overlong, overcooked confection. Stir in frequent helpings of larkish blind-man slapstick and what results is a misshapen and unsatisfying stew of genres.

This isn't the screen's first example of a sightless investigator, of course. And viewers with long memories may recall that neither of *Blind Detective*'s two main U.S. tube forerunners — James Franciscus vehicle *Longstreet* (1971-72) and Steven Bochco's *Blind Justice* (2005) — made it to a second season.

Midnight Screenings
Cast *Andy Lau, Sammi Cheng, Suet Lam, Zi Yi, Guo Tao, Gao Yuanyuan*
Director *Johnnie To*
129 minutes

Journalist Jep (Servillo, center) walks the streets of Rome.

The Great Beauty

The magical atmosphere of Fellini's *Roma* and *La Dolce Vita* pervade Paolo Sorrentino's update on cynicism featuring Toni Servillo BY DEBORAH YOUNG

Given the undiminished stature of Federico Fellini, it was inevitable that someone would think of remaking his masterpieces. Fortunately, director Paolo Sorrentino knows better than to imitate a giant, and *The Great Beauty* is more of a reverent bow, picking up where *La Dolce Vita* left off 53 years ago. Though Sorrentino's vision of moral chaos and disorder is even darker than Fellini's, he describes it all in a pleasingly creative way that pulls audiences in through humor and excess. An overly indulgent running time undercuts some of the fun as the film wears on, but it should still score high with international audiences.

It was a deft choice casting Toni Servillo as a latter-day Mastroianni, suave journalist Jep Gambardella, who moved to Rome in the 1970s and made a name for himself with a novel called *The Human Apparatus*. It's the last book he ever wrote. *Dolce Vita*'s two famous haunts, Via Veneto and the Trevi fountain where Anita Ekberg took her immortal dip, are briefly referenced. The latter is not re-enacted (how could it be?), though Jep strolls by the Bernini fountains in Piazza Navona with a beautiful stranger on his arm.

While *Dolce Vita* ended with the jaded protagonist left speechless by the innocence of a young girl on a beach, Jep wistfully stares at a very similar child, dressed in the white habit of a convent school, early in the film. This vision is the starting point of his journey into decadence, not the end point. Instead, Sorrentino turns Fellini's image of redemption into an old woman of 104, a sort of Mother Teresa figure who has devoted her life to feeding children in Africa and who ends up on Jep's terrace at dawn. She asks him why he squandered his talent as a writer, and he has no answer for her.

Since so much lies in the images, D.P. Luca Bigazzi plays a major part in creating the film's distinctive look. His feeling for Baroque palazzi and statues, streets and piazzas captures the haunting beauty of the title. The upside of the tale seems to be that, whatever the future holds, there will always exist the breathtaking, heart-breaking beauty of Rome, and the final shots from the Tiber river can be read as a consolation.

In Competition
Cast *Toni Servillo, Carlo Verdone, Sabrina Ferilli*
Director *Paolo Sorrentino*
142 mins.

Borini, Bruni Tedeschi's real-life mother, also plays her mother in the film.

A Castle in Italy

Valeria Bruni Tedeschi's big-screen roman a clef drowns its sincerity in self-consciousness BY DAVID ROONEY

There's clearly a deep personal investment and considerable self-exposure in Valeria Bruni Tedeschi's *A Castle in Italy* (*Un Chateau en Italie*), but that doesn't make its precious affectations any easier to take. The third feature from the Italian-French actress-turned-director is a semiautobiographical reflection on love, death and a retreating world of privilege that signals its debt to *The Cherry Orchard* with the unsubtle thud of a falling tree — literally.

While a character inspired by the director's famous sister, the former French first lady Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, is notably missing, other aspects of the story draw directly from real life. Bruni Tedeschi's partner until last year, Louis Garrel, plays her character's younger lover, who also happens to be an actor and son of a filmmaker; her mother, Marisa Borini, appears as her surviving parent; and the death of her brother in 2006 from AIDS complications is depicted.

The generous applause at the film's Cannes premiere may in part have been fueled by the knowledge that this was obviously a cathartic exploration of family history. Beyond the Croisette bubble, however, it's hard to imagine many audiences warming to these bourgeois folks.

As scripted by Bruni Tedeschi with regular collaborators Agnes de Sacy and Noemie Lvovsky, the film sacrifices emotional verisimilitude in favor of artsy mannerism. The jittery storytelling and indifference toward illuminating character or plot detail would already be tiresome even without the gratingly actor-y performances, the director herself being the main offender.

The 43-year-old daughter of a once-powerful Northern Italian industrialist family, Louise (Bruni Tedeschi) is more or less content with her single life in Paris. Walking through the woods one day after visiting a monastery, she meets Nathan (Garrel), who has stomped off to brood after shooting a scene on his father's movie. Recognizing her from a brief screen career that she has since abandoned, he comes on strong. She resists him at first but eventually opens her heart and her blossoming midlife crisis to him.

During a trip back to her childhood home in Piedmont, Louise seems no more inclined to address the dire financial situation of her late father's estate than either her eccentric mother (Borini) or her adored older brother Ludovic (Filippo Timi). The upkeep on the family's grand villa is crippling and taxes are mounting. But nobody seems keen on the suggestion of the local mayor (Silvio Orlando) to open the castle to paying visitors, let alone sell their valuable Brueghel canvas. His health steadily deteriorating, Ludovic is especially unwilling to let go of the past.

Dividing the action into chapters according to the seasons, Bruni Tedeschi patches together a choppy chronicle of Louise's on-off relationship with moody Nathan; her decision to have a child; Ludovic's physical decline; and the steps that Louise and her mother take, without her dying brother's knowledge, to solve the cash crisis in Italy. An ambiguous past association between Louise and Nathan's father (Andre Wilms) also comes to light.

Xavier Beauvois turns up as a mooching friend from the past, both envious of and besotted by Louise and Ludovic. However, his banal observations do nothing to expand this hermetic little movie's uninteresting world. There are moments of poignancy, but the Chekhovian balance of melancholy drama and whimsical comedy is a tricky one that seems beyond this director's grasp.

Pretty enough, though lacking any real visual distinction, the film has minimal narrative momentum. It's also surprisingly unemotional considering the sorrows endured by its characters and the close parallels with the director's own life.

That remoteness is in large part because the acting almost without exception goes for overwrought intensity or studied charm. Bruni Tedeschi's alternately teary-eyed, giggly and hysterical neuroticism, in particular, borders on self-parody. There are simpler pleasures to be found in a brief appearance by Omar Sharif as himself, gracing the film with a gentlemanly smile.

In Competition
Cast *Valeria Bruni Tedeschi, Louis Garrel, Filippo Timi, Marisa Borini, Xavier Beauvois, Celine Sallette, Andre Wilms, Marie Riviere, Omar Sharif*
Director *Valeria Bruni Tedeschi // 104 mins.*

5 Questions With Valeria Bruni Tedeschi

By Rhonda Richford

A Castle in Italy is a very personal story. What inspired it?
It's life, my life. These are the people around me. It's the pain, the dream, the desire, the shame, the thoughts, the death, the fear of death, that time passes, and love.

What is your feeling about being the only woman with a film in competition this year?
It's been a big beautiful surprise. I don't think of being a woman, I don't think it has anything to do with that. Maybe it's because people haven't seen the movie yet, but people are being so warm to me that I would just like to be able to enjoy it without discussing it. That's my only objective.

Do you think it is more difficult as a female director to get movies made or to make your mark?
I don't think it's more difficult; I think it's the same for women or men. It's difficult for everybody!

You shot the movie in Italian and French, between Italy and France. Do you feel more Italian or French?
I feel both. Internally when I speak in Italian I feel closer to my childhood, and in French I am more adult.

Do you direct in French or Italian?
I direct in French when the actors are French and in Italian when the actors are Italian. But sometimes I like to say "accione" or sometimes I say "action." We just speak in both languages on the set. THR

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Omar

Palestinian director Hany Abu-Assad, known for his portrait of suicide bombers in *Paradise Now*, is back with another strong story from the region BY DEBORAH YOUNG

Omar (Bakri, left) contemplates a life with few options.

With the Un Certain Regard entry *Omar*, the only Arab film in Cannes this year, Palestinian director Hany Abu-Assad returns to the themes of his breakthrough story of suicide bombers *Paradise Now*, and the result once again will divide audiences. There will be those who find the film's punch-in-the-stomach ending a disturbing apology for violence, and others who will read it as another tragic outcome of events in the Middle East. But whether the film glorifies its young West Bank protagonist as a hero or pities him as a loser without options, it forces the audience to reflect on the endless violence in the occupied territories. The fact that Abu-Assad keeps his distance and doesn't put forward a clear-cut POV on his characters and their actions will limit its appeal. But considering the film's quality and topicality, good footwork on Match Factory's part should slip it into the niches.

The three twentysomething protagonists are quickly and forcefully sketched. The wiry Omar (Adam Bakri) climbs the Isolation Wall separating his village from his friend Tarek's house like a cat burglar. A shot fired by an Israeli patrol bloodies his hand, but he barely notices. His childhood friends Tarek (Eyad Hourani) and Amjad (Samer Bisharat) are waiting for him on the other side. The boys slip away for some rifle practice, a prelude to what Tarek, their ringleader, calls "becoming a freedom fighter." Omar has been humiliated and roughed up by some Israeli soldiers, but that incident doesn't prepare us for the swiftness with which the trio kills a soldier one night. The next day Omar is caught and thrown into prison.

Hung naked by his wrists like a piece of meat, he's brutally beaten and tortured but says nothing. A chance remark to a fellow prisoner ("I'll never confess") is recorded and considered a valid confession under military law. A lawyer tells him he faces 90 years in jail without appeal, unless he turns traitor and betrays his friends to his captors.

These are strong scenes shot with stark lighting that heightens the drama, yet even at this stage the viewer is caught in a crossfire of mixed emotions. The casualness of the soldier's murder (Amjad pulled the trigger, but all three gladly participated) feels more like a prank than a political gesture. On the other hand, the torture scenes make sympathy for the Israeli military impossible.

To get out of prison, Omar cuts a deal with warden Rami (Waleed F. Zuaiter, the only professional actor in the cast). A few years later, when Omar tries to scale the wall again, he finds himself no longer able to muster the energy and collapses in tears. Though this is not the end of the film, it makes a fine symbolic conclusion to a young life full of frustration.

The cast of non-professionals contributes a sense of realism to the tale, with Bakri a standout in expressing the defiant confusion of youth. Abu-Assad and his cinematographer Ehab Assal have every shot under control and rarely need to go overboard to convey a strong emotion.

Un Certain Regard
Cast *Adam Bakri, Eyad Hourani*
Director-Screenwriter
Hany Abu-Assad // 98 mins.

You and the Night

Writer-director Yann Gonzalez' debut, is lyrical, kitschy and visually exquisite BY JORDAN MINTZER

A slut, a star, a stud and a teen walk into an orgy ... If you think there's a punchline to this joke, you haven't yet seen *You and the Night* (*Les Rencontres d'apres minuit*), a visually exquisite, occasionally hilarious and intermittently trying meditation on sex, love, death, camp and kitsch that marks a promising feature debut from French filmmaker Yann Gonzalez. Picture *The Breakfast Club* remixed by Jean Cocteau, Paul Morrissey, Dario Argento and Peter Greenaway, and you'll get an inkling of what this avant-garde item has in store.

Definitely too experimental for widespread art house play, *Night* should nonetheless find solid festival bookings, as well as niche theatrical play, following its out-of-competition premiere in the Critics' Week. Above all, it will establish Gonzalez, whose well-regarded shorts (*Entracte*, *Three Celestial Bodies*) already have played various Cannes sidebars, as a bold new director to look out for.

While the pitch — seven Frenchies participate in a midnight orgy — promises something like *Emmanuelle* meets Francois Ozon, the film is less a prototype of artsy, subtitled porn than it is a lyrically made mindf—, using eroticism to explore the backstories of its horny cast of characters. It's also quite funny in parts, dishing out a few gags and, in one instance, an extra-large prosthetic penis (worn by none other than soccer legend Eric Cantona).

Without further ado, we're introduced to Ali (Kate Moran) and her beau, Matthias (Niels Schneider), who await the night's events along with their man-maid, Udo (Nicolas Maury). One by one the guests arrive: The Slut (Julie Bremond), The Stud (Cantona), The Teen (Alain Rabien Delon, son of the great Alain Delon) and The Star (Fabienne Babe).

Maury as Udo the maid delivers some of the film's best lines.

If these sound like cliches, that's the point, and Gonzalez uses a structure similar to the 1985 John Hughes comedy, with the characters gradually laying themselves bare (sometimes literally) as the stereotypes tumble and their true natures are revealed. But as the action moves into fantasy mode, *Night* becomes less of a character study — which sometimes makes it drag at 90 minutes — than a sexually infused journey into the nature of storytelling, myths and film form itself.

Elegant cinematography from Simon Beaufils, overtly kitschy sets from Sidney Dubois, and an electro score from M83 that evokes both Vangelis and Daft Punk make for an impressive tech package that winds up getting much mileage out of limited means.

Critics' Week
Director-Screenwriter *Yann Gonzalez*
Cast *Kate Moran, Niels Schneider, Nicolas Maury, Eric Cantona // 91 minutes*

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2013 CANNES FESTIVAL SCREENING GUIDE

TODAY

8:30 Lumiere, ***Only God Forgives***, Competition, Ticket Required, Denmark, 90 mins., Wild Bunch; Lumiere, ***Only God Forgives***, Competition, Ticket Required, Denmark, 90 mins., Gaumont; Miramar, ***Our Heroes Died Tonight***, Critic's Week, Festival Badge, France, 94 mins., Snd - Groupe M6; Bunuel, ***Programme Courts Metrages 1***, Critic's Week, Festival Badge, 90 mins., Semaine de la Critique

9:00 Theatre Croisette, ***Ate Ver a Luz***, Directors Fortnight, Festival Badge, Switzerland, 95 mins., Udi - Urban Distribution International

11:00 Lumiere, ***All Is Lost***, Out of Competition, Ticket Required, USA, 30 mins., Filmnation Entertainment LLC; Debussy, ***La Jaula de Oro***, Un Certain Regard, Festival Badge, Mexico, 102 mins., Films Boutique

11:15 Salle du 60ème, ***Behind the Candelabra***, Competition, Festival Badge, USA, 118 mins., HBO (Home Box Office)

11:30 Arcades 1, ***A Strange Course of Events***, Directors Fortnight, Festival Badge, France, 98 mins., MK2 S.A; Miramar, ***The Major***, Critic's Week, Festival Badge, Russia, 99 mins., M-Appeal

11:45 Theatre Croisette, ***Apaches***, Directors Fortnight, Festival Badge, France, 82 mins., Pyramide

13:30 Lumiere, ***Only God Forgives***, Competition, Ticket Required, Denmark, 90 mins., Wild Bunch; Lumiere, ***Only God Forgives***, Competition, Ticket Required, Denmark, 90 mins., Gaumont; Bazin, ***Sarah Prefers to Run***, Un Certain Regard, Festival Badge, Canada, 96 mins., Entertainment One Films International

14:00 Miramar, ***Courts Metrages Le Fresnoy***, Critic's Week, Festival Badge, 90 mins., Semaine de la Critique; Salle du 60ème, ***The Great Beauty***, Competition, Festival Badge, Italy, 140 mins., Pathe International (Fr); Salle du 60ème, ***The Great Beauty***, Competition, Festival Badge, Italy, 140 mins., Pathe International (UK); Debussy, ***Wakolda***, Un Certain Regard, Festival Badge, Argentina, 94 mins., Pyramide

14:30 Bunuel, ***Cinefondation 1***, Festival Badge, 90 mins., Festival de Cannes; Theatre Croisette, ***Programme Courts 1***, Directors Fortnight, Festival Badge, 90 mins., Quinzaine des Realisateurs

15:30 Bazin, ***Bastards***, Un Certain Regard, Festival Badge, France, 100 mins., Wild Bunch

16:00 Lumiere, ***Grigris***, Competition, Ticket Required, France, 97 mins., Les Films du Losange; Debussy, ***La Jaula de Oro***, Un Certain Regard, Festival Badge, Mexico, 102 mins., Films Boutique

16:30 Bunuel, ***Goha***, Cannes Classics, Festival Badge, 78 mins., Festival De Cannes

17:00 Salle du 60ème, ***Muhammad Ali's Greatest Fight***, Out of Competition, Festival Badge, USA, 97 mins., HBO (Home Box Office); Miramar, ***The Major***, Critic's Week, Festival Badge, Russia, 99 mins., M-Appeal

18:00 Bazin, ***Wakolda***, Un Certain Regard, Festival Badge, Argentina, 94 mins., Pyramide

19:30 Lumiere, ***All Is Lost***, Out of Competition, Ticket Required, USA, 30 mins., Filmnation Entertainment LLC

19:45 Salle Du 60Eme, ***Week End of a Champion***, Out of Competition, Festival Badge, USA, 80 mins., Pathe International (Fr); Salle du 60ème, ***Week End of a Champion***, Out of Competition, Festival Badge, USA, 80 mins., Pathe International (Uk)

20:00 Miramar, ***La Collection Canal + "Le Jeu Des 7 Familles"***, Critic's Week, Festival Badge, 90 mins., Semaine De La Critique; Bunuel, ***The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz***, Cannes Classics, Festival Badge, USA, 120 mins., Echo Bridge Entertainment

21:00 Theatre Croisette, ***Apaches***, Directors Fortnight, Festival Badge, France, 82 mins., Pyramide

22:00, Salle du 60ème, ***Blood Ties***, Out of Competition, Festival Badge, USA, 144 mins., Wild Bunch; Miramar, ***The Major***, Critic's Week, Festival Badge, Russia, 99 mins., M-Appeal

22:15 Debussy, ***My Sweet Pepper Land***, Un Certain Regard, Festival Badge, France, 90 mins., Films Distribution

22:30 Lumiere, ***Only God Forgives***, Competition, Ticket Required, Denmark, 90 mins., Gaumont; Lumiere, ***Only God Forgives***, Competition, Ticket Required, Denmark, 90 mins., Wild Bunch; Arcades 1, ***The Summer Of Flying Fish***, Directors Fortnight, Festival Badge, Chile, 110 mins., Alpha Violet

Alexander Payne's *Nebraksa*

TOMORROW

8:30 Lumiere, ***Nebraska***, Competition, Ticket Required, USA, 105 mins., Filmnation Entertainment LLC; Bunuel, ***Programme Courts Metrages 2***, Critic's Week, Festival Badge, 90 mins., Semaine de la Critique; Miramar, ***The Major***, Critic's Week, Festival Badge, Russia, 99 mins., M-Appeal

9:00 Theatre Croisette, ***The Rendez-Vous of Deja-Vu***, Directors Fortnight, Festival Badge, France, Ecce Films

11:00 Bunuel, ***Cinefondation 2***, Festival Badge, 90 mins., Festival de Cannes; Debussy, ***Norte, The End Of History***, Un Certain Regard, Festival Badge, 250 mins., Wacky O Productions

11:30 Lumiere, ***Blue Is the Warmest Colour***, Competition, Ticket Required, France, 187 mins., Wild Bunch; Miramar, ***Courts Metrages Festival Morelia***, Critic's Week, Festival Badge, 76 mins., Semaine de la Critique; Theatre Croisette, ***Magic Magic***, Directors Fortnight, Festival Badge, USA, 97 mins., 6 Sales; Arcades 1, ***We Are What We Are***, Festival Badge, USA, 100 mins., Memento Films International (MFI)

11:45 Salle du 60ème, ***Only God Forgives***, Competition, Festival Badge, Denmark, 90 mins., Wild Bunch; Salle du 60ème, ***Only God Forgives***, Competition, Festival Badge, Denmark, 90 mins., Gaumont

14:00 Salle du 60ème, ***Grigris***, Competition, Festival Badge, France, 97 mins., Les Films du Losange; Theatre Croisette, ***Programme Courts 2***, Directors Fortnight, Festival Badge, 90 mins., Quinzaine Des Realisateurs

14:30 Bunuel, ***Cinefondation 3***, Festival Badge, 90 mins., Festival De Cannes

15:00 Bazin, ***La Jaula de Oro***, Un Certain Regard, Festival Badge, Mexico, 102 mins., Films Boutique THR

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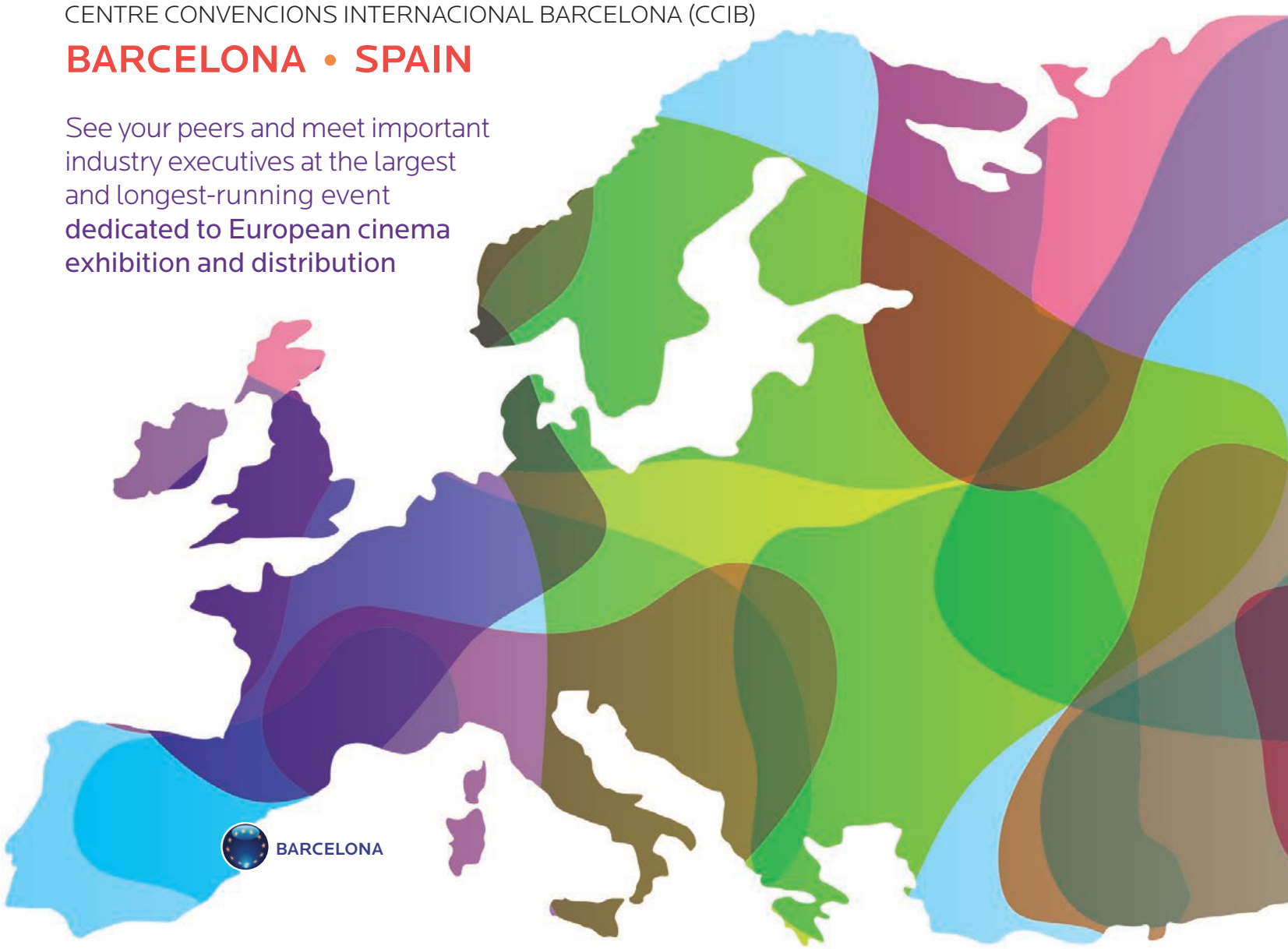

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MARKET SCREENING GUIDE

TODAY

9:15 Olympia 5, ***Blood Ties***, Out of Competition, USA, 144 Mins., Wild Bunch

9:30 Riviera 4, ***Hanni & Nanni 3***, Germany, 90 Mins., Global Screen Gmbh; Lerins 1, ***Inequality for All***, USA, 90 Mins., Films Distribution; Arcades 3, ***Sarah Prefers to Run***, Un Certain Regard, Canada, 96 Mins., Entertainment One Films International; Palais F, ***Taj Mahal***, Iran, 82 Mins., Soureh Cinema Organization; Riviera 2, ***The Pin***, Canada, 83 Mins., Scythia Films Inc.

10:00 Palais E, ***Black Really Suits You***, France, 88 Mins., Cinexport; Gray 5, ***Free Pussy Riot - The Movie***, USA, 82 Mins., Golden World Films; Riviera 3, ***It's All So Quiet***, Netherlands, 93 Mins., Films Distribution; Lerins 2, ***Offline***, Belgium, 110 Mins., Lumière; Arcades 2, ***Omar***, Un Certain Regard, Palestine, 98 Mins., The Match Factory; Palais I, ***Ombline***, France, 95 Mins., Arsam; Palais G, ***The Prisoner***, United Kingdom, 90 Mins., Sindika Productions; Riviera 1, ***Viramundo***, Switzerland, 95 Mins., Udi - Urban Distribution International; Palais C, ***Winter of Discontent***, Egypt, 94 Mins., Double Dutch International

11:30 Palais B, ***Blind Intersections***, Lebanon, 92 Mins., Fondation Liban Cinema; Palais D, ***First Time Loser***, United Kingdom, 95 Mins., Ace Film Ltd; Lerins 1, ***La Maison de la Radio***, France, 103 Mins., Les Films du Losange; Palais F, ***New Quebec Short Films***, 110 Mins., Sodec (Société de Développement des Entreprises Culturelles); Riviera 4, ***Ruby Red***, Germany, 122 Mins., Tele München Internationa; Riviera 2, ***The Good Lie***, Canada, 90 Mins., Filmoption International; Palais H, ***The Notorious Guys***, Luxembourg, 83 Mins., Double Dutch International; Star 3, ***The Spirit of '45***, United Kingdom, 94 Mins., Wild Bunch

12:00 Olympia 4, ***Cupcakes***, Israel, 90 Mins., Films Distribution; Palais E, ***Die Welt***, Netherlands, 85 Mins., Premium Films; Palais G, ***I Am the Happiness on Earth***, Mexico, 115 Mins., The Open Reel; Gray 5, ***I Used to Be Darker***, USA, 90 Mins., New Europe Film Sales; Palais I, ***Jal***, 100 Mins., Insomnia World Sales; Palais C, ***Locked in a Garage Band***, Canada, 86 Mins., Double Dutch International; Lerins 2, ***Shirley - Visions of Reality***, Austria, 92 Mins., Eastwest Filmdistribution Gmbh; Riviera 3, ***Suzanne***, Critic's Week, France, 90 Mins., Films Distribution; Olympia 5, ***The Lunchbox***, Critic's Week, India, 104 Mins., The Match Factory

The Match Factory's *The Lunchbox*

13:30 Riviera 2, ***A Castle in Italy***, Competition, France, 103 Mins., Films Distribution; Arcades 3, ***The Owners***, Critic's Week, Argentina, 95 Mins., The Match Factory; Star 3, ***Tour de Force***, No Press, Buyers Only, France, 98 Mins., Wild Bunch

13:45 Riviera 4, ***End of Time*** (***Endzeit***), Germany, 90 Mins., Fritzsch & Tiefenbach Produktion

14:00 Riviera 3, ***Oass — The Dew Drop***, India, 105 Mins., Philind Motion Pictures; Gray 5, ***Reel Suspects Promoreels***, Invite Only, 50 Mins., Reel Suspects; Palais G, ***Sadik 2***, France, 75 Mins., 2017 Films; Palais E, ***Shunned***, Philippines, 70 Mins., Silent Voices Productions, LLC.; Lerins 2, ***Stop Over***, Directors Fortnight, Switzerland, 100 Mins., Doc & Film International; Palais I, ***The Best of the 48 HFP***, 110 Mins., 48 Hour Film Project, Inc.; Olympia 4, ***The Missing Picture***, Un Certain Regard, France, 90 Mins., Films Distribution; Palais C, ***The Radio of Hope: After Tsunami 3.11***, Japan, 70 Mins., Open Sesame Co, Ltd; Arcades 2, ***Wakolda***, Un Certain Regard, Argentina, 94 Mins., Pyramide

15:00 Gray 5, ***Reel Suspects Promoreels***, Invite Only, 50 Mins., Reel Suspects

15:30 Palais J, ***Canada: Talent Tout Court / Not Short On Talent***, 110 Mins, Telefilm Canada; Palais H, ***Class Enemy***, Slovenia, 110 Mins., Slovenian Film Centre; Palais F, ***Crustaceans***, Spain, 95 Mins., Tiempos Dificiles Films; Riviera 4, ***Intimate Parts***, Invite Only, Russia, 78 Mins., Antipode Sales & Distribution LLC; Riviera 2, ***Little Thirteen***, Germany, 96 Mins., Arri Worldsales; Lerins 1, ***Mauvais Sang (Restored)***, France, 116 Mins., Films Distribution; Palais D, ***Shortcut Romeo***, India, 146 Mins., Susi Ganesh Production Private Limited; Star 3, ***The Broken Circle Breakdown***, Belgium, 100 Mins., The Match Factory; Palais B, ***Uomo***, Argentina, 84 Mins., Primer Plano Film Group Sa

15:45 Palais C, ***Cheba Louisa***, France, 100 Mins., Elle Driver

16:00 Gray 3, ***Bab Sharki***, Egypt, 77 Mins., Egypt Films; Riviera 3, ***Cycle***, Hungary, 78 Mins., Eastwest Filmdistribution Gmbh; Gray 5, ***Gay Gardens***, USA, 88 Mins., L.a. Connections; Star 2, ***Like Father, Like Son***, Competition, Japan, 120 Mins., Wild Bunch; Olympia 4, ***Oggy and the Cockroaches***, France, 80 Mins., Films Distribution; Palais G, ***Patagonia de los Sueños***, Chile, 100 Mins., Jls Producciones de Cine Y Tv; Palais E, ***Soldier Jane***, Austria, 79 Mins., Premium Films; Palais I, ***Tamla Rose***, United Kingdom, 105 Mins., Ace Film Ltd

17:30 Arcades 3, ***A Facebook Romance***, Jordan, 90 Mins., Sindika Production; Palais F, ***Best of World Cinema***, USA, 120 Mins., Greta Joanne Entertainment; Palais H, ***India Blues***, Germany, 96 Mins., Cornelsen Films; Arcades 1, ***Inside Llewyn Davis***, Competition, USA, 110 Mins., Studiocanal; Riviera 2, ***Lost Place 3D***, Germany, 99 Mins., Valuetainment Corp. / Div. Valuefilms Licensing

18:00 Riviera 1, ***Alik Sukh***, India, 130 Mins., Windows; Theatre Croisette, ***Ate Ver a Luz***, Directors Fortnight, Switzerland, 95 Mins., Udi - Urban Distribution International; Palais C, ***Diablo***, Argentina, 85 Mins, Kafilms; Gray 3, ***Faith Connections***, No Press, Buyers Only, India, 150 Mins., Cité Films; Palais E, ***Hedda***, United Kingdom, 110 Mins, Matthew John Productions; Palais I, ***My Destiny***, Italy, 80 Mins., The Open Reel; Riviera 3, ***My Name Is Viola***, USA, 107 Mins., Rk Films, LLC

18:15 Star 2, ***The Last Days***, No Press, Buyers Only, Spain, 101 Mins, Wild Bunch

20:00 Arcades 1, ***Swandown***, Acid, United Kingdom, 94 Mins., Acid

20:30 Riviera 3, ***Out of Africa: Quest for the Northern Lights***, South Africa, 90 Mins., Boilerroom Studios Pty Ltd

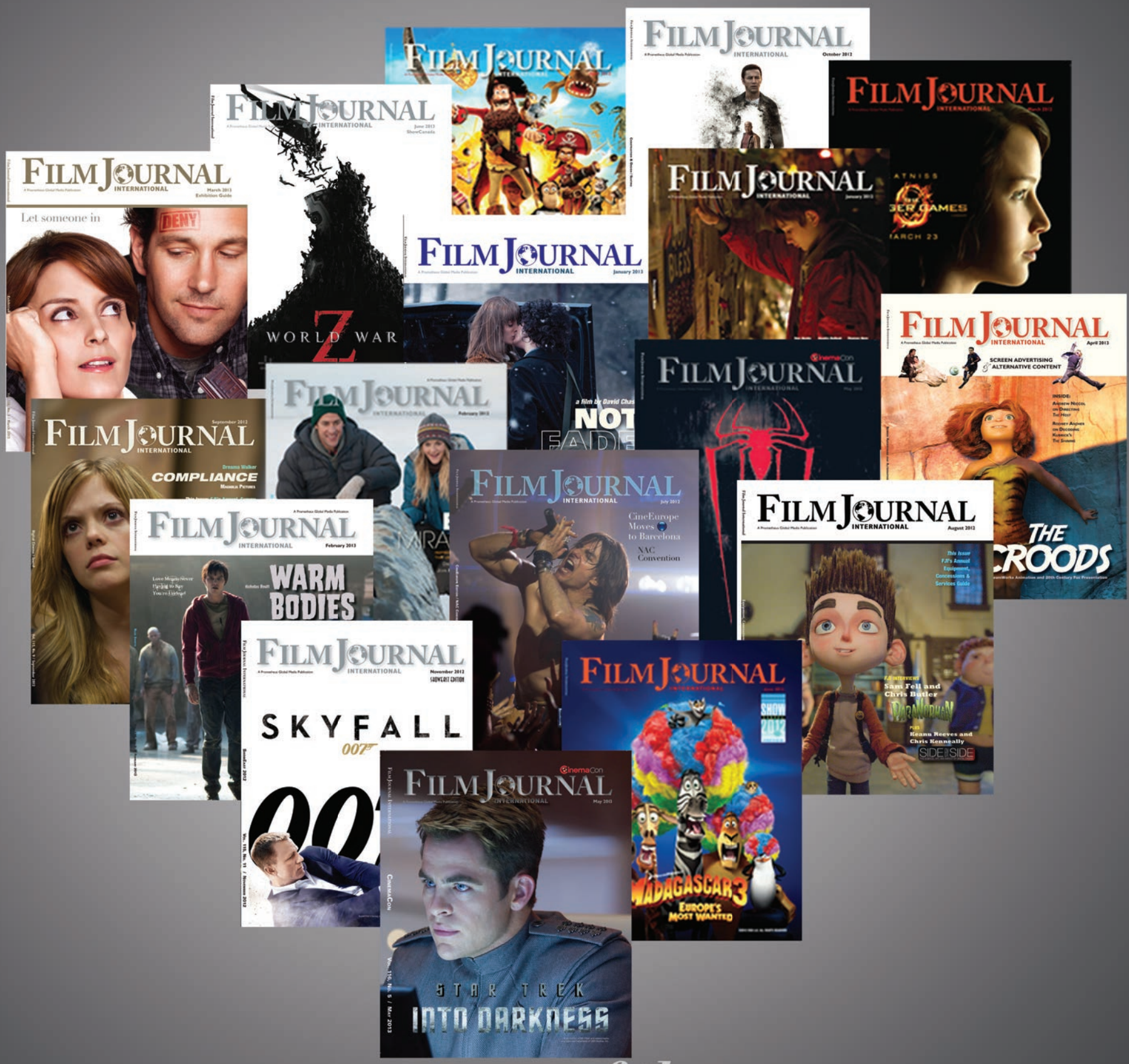
TOMORROW, 5/23

9:30 Olympia 6, ***The Congress***, Directors Fortnight, Israel, 122 Mins., The Match Factory

10:00 Star 2, ***Dark Touch***, No Press, Buyers Only, France, 90 Mins, Wild Bunch; Riviera 3, ***Ombline***, France, 95 Mins., Arsam

11:30 Palais F, ***Romanian Short Waves***, 110 Mins, Short Film Corner 2013; Star 3, ***Ugly***, Directors Fortnight, India, 100 Mins., Elle Driver

12:00 Star 2, ***Scorpion in Love***, No Press, Buyers Only, Spain, 94 Mins, Wild Bunch; Olympia 6, ***The Lunchbox***, Critic's Week, India, 104 Mins., The Match Factory THR



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competition it could have been a
Golden Palm winner. The much-ex-
pected Fellini did not show up, but he
had his posters all over the Carleton
Hotel facade covered in red paint. A
group of angry women — including
Eleanor Perry, Carol Ryan from Don
Rugoff's office, and Sara Palevsky
(Max's wife)—brought some red paint
and a ladder, and before the local
police knew what was happening, the
large gold-colored poster of a crouch-
ing woman with three breasts (a laugh
at the she-wolf emblem of Rome) was
bright red.
Much awaited was the arrival of
Alfred Hitchcock, who came in Sunday
on the liner Michelangelo from New
York. He will present his latest film,
"Frenzy," on Friday night.
(Continued on Page 11)

"In those days, things were more natural. Stars could walk freely without limos," says Rissient (far left) with Redford (center) and Pollack in Cannes in 1972.

AP PHOTO/LEVY

In 1972, Robert Redford brought *Jeremiah Johnson* to Cannes

ROBERT REDFORD'S first visit to Cannes was in 1956 when the actor was a 19-year-old art student hitchhiking between Paris and Florence. "I was dumped by a truck in Cannes," Redford recalled in 2011. "It was late at night and I had nowhere to stay." He slept on the beach beneath the pier near the Carlton hotel and could hear the guests above him. "Man, what would it feel like being up there in a tuxedo and enjoying myself?" he wondered.

Redford found out in 1972 when he brought the Sydney Pollack-directed *Jeremiah Johnson*, about a man struggling for survival in the West, to the festival. Says producer Pierre Rissient, who was helping the actor promote the movie: "Before Cannes, Warner Bros. didn't believe in the film. But we did a lot of interviews; it became a sensation with critics, and went on to be a big commercial success." Redford was lucky to get the attention he did considering the major names on hand that year. Groucho Marx was an honored guest. Elia Kazan's next-to-last film, *The Visitors*, was in competition, as was Robert Altman's *Images* and George Roy Hill's *Slaughterhouse-Five*. The out-of-competition lineup was no less impressive, with Alfred Hitchcock's *Frenzy*, Roman Polanski's Hugh Hefner-financed *Macbeth* and Federico Fellini's *Roma*. But while *Jeremiah Johnson* left the fest a better-known film, it won no prizes. Redford, now 76, takes on the elements again — the sea, this time — as the sole actor in J.C. Chandor's *All Is Lost*, screening out of competition at this year's fest. — BILL HIGGINS

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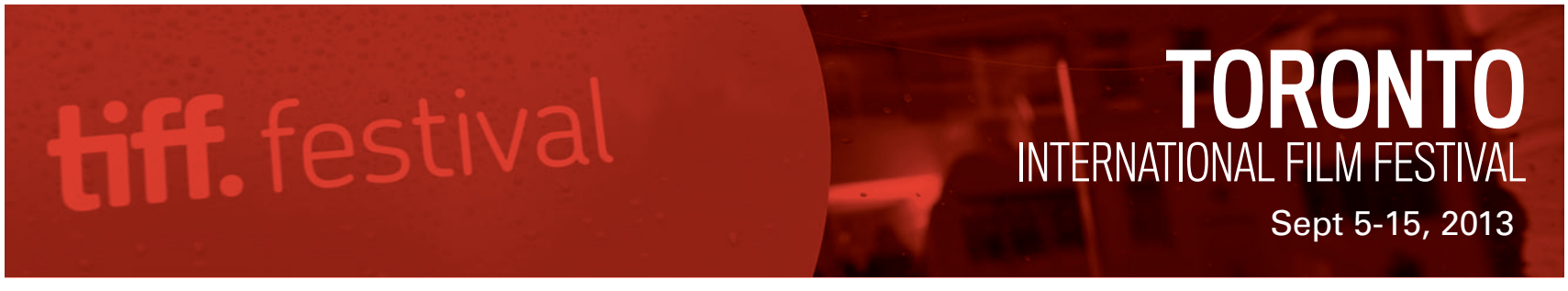

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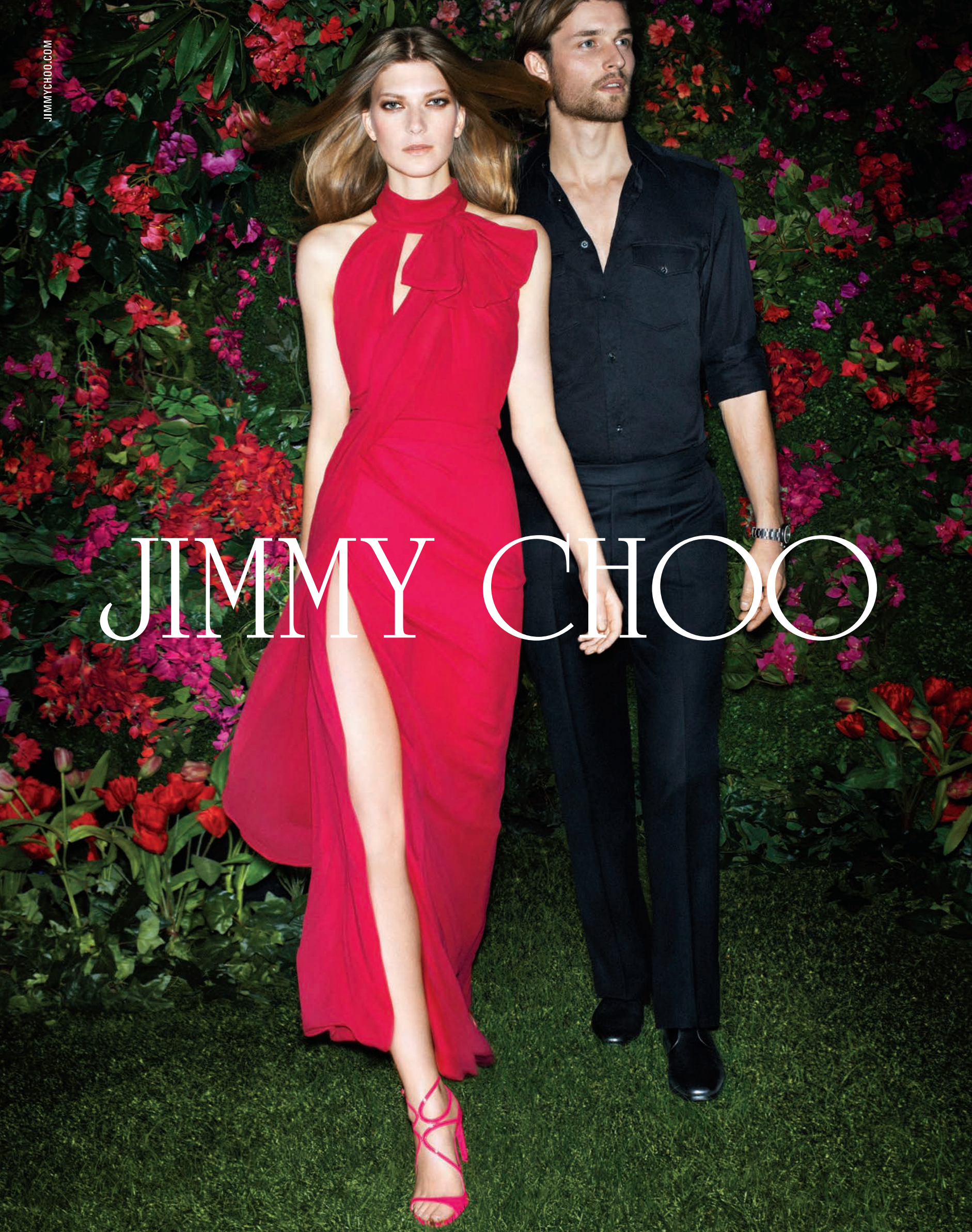
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